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D'ARTAGNAN WILL NOT HAVE HIS HORSE LAUGHED AT

THE ALL SORTS OF STORIES BOOK

BY
MRS. LANG

EDITED BY ANDREW LANG



*WITH 5 COLOURED PLATES AND
NUMEROUS OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS BY H. J. FORD*

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA

1911

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P R E F A C E

(N.B.—*There are stories in this Preface*)

THIS new Story Book is of a new sort, for the tales are of many different kinds ; some are true, like the history of the man who met in America the other man whom he had been hanged for murdering in England. This may to any unthinking person seem all very natural, but if you think hard you will wonder how the first man got to America after being hanged in England, and how the second man, after being murdered in England, arrived in America. Neither event seems possible, yet both actually occurred. But this happened a hundred and fifty years ago, and could not happen now, when people do not hang a person for murder before they are quite certain that somebody has been murdered—that the man said to have been slain is really dead. Again, the man who was hanged would, in our time, have been buried as soon as he was believed to be dead ; but in times not so very far from ours a murderer, when once thought dead, was suspended in iron chains in a conspicuous place, so that his crime and punishment might not be forgotten.

If you read *The Fairchild Family*, by Mrs. Sherwood, who wrote about eighty years ago, you will find that good Mr. Fairchild took his naughty children to see a body of a murderer hanging in irons, so that they might know what to expect if they let their angry passions rise. This was what people call an ‘object lesson,’ but your dear papa cannot give you this kind of lesson now,

because in our fields there are now no such disgusting objects.

Come, now, I will tell another true story about a man who was hanged, but escaped. It was in the year 1429, when the English were fighting in France, and the Scots were on the French side. The English were strong in Brittany, and a Scot named Michael Hamilton, from Bothwell in Lanarkshire, went with other Scots and French to burn and plunder in Brittany. Near a place called Clisson they found an empty tower, and there they dwelt and did all sorts of mischief. They caught, one day, a Breton who was spying on them and tortured him cruelly till he told them about the intentions of the English soldiers. They learned that a great company of the English were going to attack their tower on that very night. So they determined to mount and ride; but Michael Hamilton went for his horse later than the others because he could not deny himself the pleasure of hanging the prisoner from the bough of a tree. Just as he had finished he saw the English coming up; they were between him and the stables; he could not reach his horse and was obliged to run away. But he was in full armour, and nobody can run fast when he is wearing things like steel cricket-pads on his legs. The country people who were with the English wore no armour; they ran after Michael and threw the noose of a rope over his neck. At that moment Michael prayed a prayer to the holy Saint Catherine, the patron of his village church at home. He vowed that if she would help him now he would make a pilgrimage to her chapel at Fierbois, in France. In spite of his prayer he was hanged by the son of the man whom he had hanged himself, and now you might think that all was over with Michael. However, he lived and made his pilgrimage to Fierbois, and told his story to the priest of the chapel, who wrote it down in a book, which you may read in printed English.

Michael's story was this. On the night of his hanging, the night of Maundy Thursday, the priest of Clisson was going to bed, when he heard a clear voice in his room saying, 'Go and cut down the Scottish soldier who was hanged, for he is still alive.'

The priest thought he was dreaming or that someone was playing a trick on him. The voice kept on speaking, and the priest looked into his cupboard, and up the chimney, and under the bed, and everywhere, but he could find no speaker. So the holy man went to bed, and slept soundly, and next day did his services for Good Friday. Then about noon he told the sexton to go and look at the Scot, and find out whether he were alive or dead. The sexton walked away whistling for joy at the death of a Scot, but he came back running with a very white face.

He could scarcely speak for fear, but his story was that he had found the Scot, and, to try whether he were alive or not, had taken out his knife and sliced one of his toes. The blood came, and the foot kicked !

The priest therefore, with other people, went to the wood and cut Michael down, and poured wine into his mouth, till he sat up and swore just like himself. The son of the man whom Michael had hanged was looking on ; he drew his sword and dealt a blow at Michael's head, cutting off one of his ears. This is quite true, for when Michael came to Fierbois he had only one ear, also a great scar on his toe where the sexton sliced it.

The priest and the others rushed on the man with the sword, disarmed him, and drove him out of the house.

Michael was then taken to a kind Abbess, who nursed him till he was well ; but he was in no hurry to fulfil his vow and make his pilgrimage. On the other hand, he went into barracks with other soldiers, and misbehaved as usual. But one night, as he lay in bed in a

room where other soldiers lay, he received a sounding slap in the face, though he could see nobody near him, and heard a voice say, 'Wilt thou never remember thy pilgrimage?'

On this Michael borrowed or stole a horse, and rode to Fierbois, where he told his story, and it was written down in the book of the chapel.

Thus we see that very strange things may happen. Can you imagine anything more strange than the story called 'What became of Old Mr. Harrison'? In this tale two people were hanged for the murder of a man who was alive and well, and one of them confessed his guilt. This proves once more that it is a mistake to punish one man for killing another before we are quite sure that the other is dead. The law does not now allow this to be done; but in the reign of Charles II., when old Mr. Harrison 'softly and suddenly vanished away,' the law was not so particular, at least in country places. Nobody can even guess why old Mr. Harrison vanished away, from a place close to his own house, and why he stayed away for years, and why he came back, and where he had been, and how nobody ever saw him at all, going or coming back. Lastly, nobody can believe a word of the story which he told about his adventures in foreign parts; it is like a confused dream. Yet, except Mr. Harrison's own tremendous fibs, the rest of the story is all quite true; it was printed at the time.

Then take the tale called 'The Vanishing of Bathurst.' In a moment, under the eyes of several persons, as he stood (in the dusk) at the heads of the horses of his carriage, Mr. Bathurst disappeared. If you have read *The Hunting of the Snark*, you may think that Mr. Bathurst met a Boojum and 'softly and suddenly vanished away.' People at the Zoological Gardens may tell you that there are no Boojums, and certainly they have none there. But this is a foolish argument, for, while many people have *seen* Boojums, of course

they cannot describe these creatures, for they themselves vanish away, and are not able to speak or write.

There is a true story of a Boofum which, as you have not heard it before, I now proceed to narrate. In a village in Dorset, about a hundred years ago, there lived an old tailor named Owen Parfitt. He had long been paralysed ; that is, he could not use his legs, but had to be carried about by his maid-servant, and a sister even older than himself. On a fine afternoon in summer they took his great armchair out of doors into the sun, laid his great-coat, folded up, on the chair, in case the old man felt chilly, and then carried him downstairs, and made him comfortable in the chair, as they had often done before. There he used to sit and watch the chickens and cats, and gossip to any neighbour who bade him good-day.

About a quarter of an hour later his old sister wanted to say something to him. She cried from the upper window, 'Owen !' but there was no answer. He might be asleep, he might even be dead, so the old woman hobbled downstairs to the door. There was Owen's chair, there was his great-coat where she had placed it, but Owen was never seen again !

Remember that he could not move, he had no power in his legs, he had to be carried about. Nobody wanted to steal old Owen. He had simply vanished away, and it is perfectly clear that he must have seen a Boofum. You cannot explain the thing in any other way. Even if Owen had by a miracle recovered the use of his legs, people must have seen him in the neighbourhood, if he had marched off. But, in spite of all search, nobody ever saw Owen Parfitt again, and there were then no railways, no means of getting quickly away.

As to Mr. Bathurst, his trousers were discovered after his disappearance ; but never a trouser or hat or anything of Owen's could be found.

The stories which I have mentioned, though true,

are not tiresome, I hope. The story of 'Old Jeffery' is another kind of tale, also quite true. We read it in the letters written at the time by the Wesley family, who were so much puzzled and bored by what they called 'Old Jeffery.' They were not only good and truthful, but very intelligent people. Who can explain what they tell us? Not I, for one. You cannot even call the story a ghost story. Nobody who was likely to play the tricks had died, so *there was nobody to be the ghost of*. Some people think that Miss Hetty Wesley, a very pretty, lively girl, played the tricks, but how could she? Anybody may try who likes: the tricks are not so easy.

People who believe that there are Boojums also think that there are Brownies; if they are right, Old Jeffery was a playful, not an industrious, Brownie.

Besides these stories we give a few fairy tales, such as 'How a Boy became first a Lamb and then an Apple.' There are Highland stories, too, like 'The Battle of the White Bull,' and there are some fairy tales that the old Greeks told each other so long, long ago, even before Homer made the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Homer mentions 'Meleager the Hunter,' but not the story of the Brand; and he also mentions Melampus and Bias in 'The Serpents' Gift,' but only just alludes to them, as if everyone knew all about them already. Of 'Heracles the Dragon-Killer' you must have heard; here are many of his tremendous adventures.

Then we have several stories of adventures that happened to real people, such as Charles II., while he wandered in England with Noll Cromwell's hounds at his heels. 'My Aunt Margaret's Mirror,' though a very strange story, really happened—to the grandmother of the aunt of Sir Walter Scott. Then you have the best stories of treasure-hunts, and some of the pick of the adventures of the glorious Three Musketeers—Porthos, Athos, and Aramis, who were real men and

Musketeers, as was d'Artagnan their friend. But these stories are not necessarily in all points true, as they were written by the greatest of all story-tellers, Alexandre Dumas.

So, with other stories of wrecks and Red Indians, I hope you will find something to your taste in *The All Sorts of Stories Book*.

The stories were written, as they are given here, by Mrs. Lang ; we hunted for and caught them in all sorts of books.

A. LANG.

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*HOW A BOY BECAME FIRST A LAMB
AND THEN AN APPLE*

ONCE upon a time there lived a woman who had two children, a boy named Asterinos, and a daughter called Pulja. Her husband was a huntsman, and spent most of his days in the woods and hills round the cottage, generally bringing back something nice to cook for supper.

One evening he came home earlier than usual, carrying in his wallet a pigeon which he had just shot. The woman took it out, and after she had plucked it, hung it on a nail so that it might be handy to put into the pot at the proper moment. Then she went next door to have a chat with her neighbour and thought no more about the pigeon till it was getting near the dinner hour.

Unluckily, when she left the house, the woman had never noticed the cat, who was curled up under a chair, pretending to be sound asleep, and on his part he was very careful not to stir or to remind her that he was there. But as soon as she was safely out of the way the cat stepped briskly from his hiding-place, sprung at the pigeon which was hanging from the nail, and bringing it to the ground, ate it all up. When nothing of it was left but a few bits of bones, he got up and arched his back with satisfaction, and vanished through the door which the woman had left open.

Scarcely had the cat disappeared when in she came, and walked over to the place where the pigeon should

have been hanging. The empty nail and the scattered bones told their own tale, and the woman shivered with fright lest her husband, angry at the loss of his dinner, should give her a beating.

‘What *am* I to do?’ she cried, ‘the larder is empty!’ and in despair she cut off part of the calf of her leg and threw it into the pot.

‘Is dinner ready?’ asked the man, when by-and-by he returned from a nap in the sun.

‘Yes, here it is’ said the wife, and the man sat down.

‘That was very good! What was it?’ inquired the husband when he had finished, and his wife told him all that had happened.

‘Well, now we can eat the children,’ said he; ‘they will make us a fine dinner.to-morrow,’ and away he went, leaving the poor woman half dead with fear and sorrow. She dared not disobey him, she knew, if he told her to kill them, for she was terribly afraid of her husband, and if *she* did not do it *he* would; and in her despair the poor woman dragged herself wearily upstairs and threw herself on her bed.

Happily for the children, who were already fast asleep, the dog, who was stretched out in front of the fire with his ears cocked, had overheard the conversation, and as soon as all was still in the cottage he crept to the corner where the brother and sister lay, and put his cold nose against their cheeks.

‘Get up! get up! and run away as fast as you can, or your mother will kill you,’ he whispered; but the children sleepily pushed his nose away, and turned over on their other sides.

‘Get up! get up! there is no time to lose,’ repeated the dog, and taking a curl of the little girl’s hair between his teeth, he began to draw her gently out of bed.

‘You must be quick,’ he said again, when he had explained their danger. ‘Wake your brother, and go

with him into the forest, and above all make no noise.' The girl did as she was bid, and in another instant the boy stood on the floor beside her.

'What shall we take with us?' asked he.

'What shall we take? I'm sure I don't know, Asterinos. Yet, stay! We will take a knife, a comb, and a handful of salt. And the dog too, of course!' So putting the knife and comb in the pockets of their two little coats they ran into the wood, the girl grasping the salt tight in her hand. But quiet as they fancied they had been, their mother had heard them, and when the dog glanced back along the path he saw that she was following.

'Look!' he cried to the children, and they looked and froze with fear.

'She will catch us!' screamed Asterinos, but his sister answered:

'No, no! Never. Run quicker! Run!'

'She is close to us, Pulja,' he panted, a few minutes later.

'Throw the knife behind you,' said she, and he threw it. Then a wide stony plain appeared lying between her and them, so wide and stony that it seemed as if it would take days to cross it, but the woman bounded from one rock to another, gaining on them with every stride.

'She is very near now,' whispered the boy again.

'Run faster,' replied his sister, 'she shall never catch us.'

'But she must,' he gasped. 'I can run no quicker.'

'Here is the comb; throw it behind you,' said she, and he threw it, and behind them rose a thick, black forest. But step by step the mother fought her way through the trees, and for the third time she had almost reached the children, when Pulja turned and let fall the salt in her hand, and immediately a wide sea covered the land, with the mother on one shore and the children on the other.

‘Come back ! Come back ! I will not hurt you,’ cried she, but as they hesitated she grew angry and struck herself on the breast. This frightened them, and they turned away and ran on faster than ever.

They had gone quite a long distance, when Asterinos, who was the younger of the two, suddenly stopped.

‘I am so thirsty, Pulja,’ said he.

‘Go on a little longer,’ answered she, ‘for straight in front is the king’s fountain and you can drink there.’ But they had only gone a little way further when Asterinos dropped behind, and called out a second time :

‘I shall faint ; I want some water,’ and as he spoke his eyes fell on the print of a wolf’s hoof, where water had settled.

‘Ah !’ he shouted joyfully ; ‘here is some, I’ll drink that.’

‘No, no !’ cried Pulja, pulling him away as he was stooping down ; ‘if you drink that you will turn into a wolf and will eat me. Come on a little further.’

‘Do you *really* think I should become a wolf ?’ asked Asterinos, full of wonder. ‘Well, perhaps I might, but I don’t believe I should ever want to eat you, even if I was a tiger,’ and the two walked on till they reached a sheep track which was full of water.

‘I can’t go on any longer ; I *must* drink this,’ said the boy.

‘No, no !’ replied his sister, ‘you will turn into a lamb, and then someone will eat you !’

‘They *must* eat me then, for I shall die of thirst,’ answered the boy, throwing himself down beside the water. But hardly had he swallowed the first mouthful when his hair grew soft and woolly and covered all his body ; his legs and arms became the same length, and he was no more Asterinos but a little lamb.

He ran up to his sister, who was standing with her

eyes fixed on the path before her ; she had known what would happen, and could not bear to see it.

‘ Baa ! Pulja, Baa ! Pulja,’ was all he could say,



though he could understand what was said to him as well as he could before.

‘ Come with me,’ she called sadly, and on they went till they reached the king’s fountain, which was sheltered

from the sun by a big cypress tree. Here the girl knelt down and took a long drink, but the lamb was not thirsty any more. When she had finished she stood up.

‘Stay here with the dog till I return. And while he grazed peacefully she went out of sight behind the great cypress, and climbed and climbed and climbed up its branches till at the very top she found a beautiful golden throne, and sat herself down on it.

Soon there was heard the tramp of hoofs, and one of the king’s servants appeared leading two horses to the well to drink. But as they approached the cypress tree the rays which streamed from Pulja and her throne were so bright that the horses shied and broke away, fearing they knew not what. The man looked upwards to see where the light came from, and when he beheld a beautiful maiden on the topmost boughs he said :

‘Come down, for the horses must drink, and the sight of you frightens them.’

‘No ; I shall stay where I am,’ answered she ; ‘I am not hurting you. The horses can drink as much as they like.’

‘Come down !’ called the man louder than before, but Pulja paid no heed to him, and did not stir.

Then the servant went to the king’s son, and told him that a maiden of wondrous beauty was sitting in the cypress tree, and that the bright beams of light which she shed had so frightened the horses that they had refused to drink at the well, and had run away.

So the prince hastened to the well, and standing under the boughs thrice bade the maiden come down, but she would not.

‘If you will not do as you are told we shall have to cut down the tree,’ he said at last.

‘Well, cut it down,’ answered she. ‘I mean to stay where I am.’



The WITCH gets PULGA down from the tree

The young man felt that further talking was useless, so he sent a messenger to bring some wood-cutters from the forest. They struck hard at the trunk with their axes, but the lamb slipped unseen to the other side, and licked the tree, so that it suddenly grew twice as thick, and all the axes could do was to pierce the bark. At length the prince lost his patience, and bade the wood-cutters return home, for they were useless fellows, and went himself in search of an old woman who was held to be very wise.

‘Fetch me down that girl from the tree,’ he said to her, ‘and I will give you your hood full of gold.’

‘Oh, I will fetch her,’ answered the old woman, and taking from a cupboard a bowl, a sieve and a sack of meal followed the prince to the tree.

Standing where she knew the girl must see her, the old woman turned the bowl upside down on the ground, and holding the sieve the wrong way up in her hand began to rub some meal through it, which ought to have fallen into the bowl underneath. She had done this for a little while when suddenly she heard a voice saying :

‘That is not the way ; you are all wrong.’

‘Is that anyone speaking to me ?’ asked the old woman, pretending to look about. ‘Where are you ?’ but the girl only repeated her words.

‘Come and show me how to do it, and I will bless you for ever,’ cried the old woman at last, and the maiden rose slowly from the golden throne and climbed down the tree. The moment her feet touched the ground the prince, who had remained hidden, sprang forward and catching her in his arms swung her on to his shoulder, carried her off to the castle, the dog and the lamb following behind them. In a few days they were married, and the people declared that never had there been so beautiful a bride.

Now Princess Pulja was so pretty and pleasant

that she won the hearts of everybody in the palace, beginning with the king ; and the queen, who loved admiration, became very jealous and spiteful. She did, not dare to say anything as long as the prince was there, but one day, when he had gone to hunt with his father, she ordered her attendants to seize the princess, who was wandering in the garden, and to throw her into the river.

‘*That is a good riddance,*’ said the queen, when they told her that her commands had been obeyed, and she waited with a beaming face till her son returned in the evening.

‘Where is my wife ?’ asked the prince as he entered the palace.

‘Your wife ? Oh ! she went out for a walk,’ answered the queen, and the prince hastened to the garden to look for her. As soon as he was out of sight the queen said to her attendants :

‘Now that my daughter-in-law is out of the way we can kill that lamb.’

‘Very well, madam,’ answered they, but the lamb happened to be under the windows and overheard, and he stole away behind some bushes down to the river.

‘Pulja, Pulja ! they are going to kill me,’ cried he in his own language, and though most people would have thought he was saying nothing but ‘baa,’ Pulja understood.

‘Never fear, dear child ; they cannot hurt you,’ whispered she, through the gurgling of the brook, but the lamb cried again :

‘But, Pulja, do you hear ? they are going to *kill* me !’

‘No, no ! do not be frightened. They shall not hurt you !’

‘But, Pulja, even now they are sharpening the knife, and have begun to seek me,’ and then with a



THE PRINCESS-PULJA AND THE MURDERED LAMB.

shriek : 'Pulja, Pulja ! they have got me ! Pulja !' And Pulja heard, and with one bound burst the bonds which held her in the brook, and rushed to the lamb, who was struggling in the hands of his captors.

With tears and prayers she implored them to let him go, but it was too late. One blow, and he lay dead at her feet.

'My lamb, my lamb !' screamed Pulja, flinging herself on the ground beside him, and the king, who was walking in the garden, heard the noise and came to see what was the matter.

'Poor girl, poor girl !' said he, 'can I do nothing to comfort you ? Shall I have his likeness made in gold ?'

'What good would that do ?' she asked. 'My lamb, my lamb !'

And the king could think of nothing to say but 'What is done, is done.'

The lamb was roasted whole and placed on the table, and the servants, who did not know that it had ever been anything except a lamb, called to Pulja to sit down and eat.

But the girl refused.

'Come, princess, come,' they urged again, but still she would not listen, so at last they sat down to eat themselves. When they had finished, Pulja gathered up the bones, and put them in a basket, and buried them in the garden. And over the place there sprung up a great apple tree, bigger than any that ever was seen, and on its boughs a golden apple. Many people came by that way and tried to pluck it, but just as it seemed within reach of their hands they somehow found it was a little above them, and jump as they would it was always out of their reach.

When everyone about the palace had sought to gather the apple and failed, Pulja said to the king :

'Now it is my turn ; I will see what *I* can do.'

‘But where so many have tried in vain, is it likely you will succeed?’ asked he.

‘Perhaps not; but with your permission I should like to try,’ answered she.

‘Then luck be with you,’ said he. So she went straight to the tree, and looked up at the golden apple shining high over her head. And as she looked the apple sank lower and lower, till at length it was within reach of her hand, and a voice whispered, ‘Now you can pluck me.’ When her fingers had closed tightly over her prize she put it in her pocket, and returning to the palace she said:

‘Farewell, my husband and my father-in-law who have been so kind to me; and you, my mother-in-law, may you suffer all the ill-fortune you deserve. As for me, you will nevermore behold me.’ With that she went through the gate into the world, and whether the apple in her pocket ever turned into her brother Asterinos no man can tell.

From Hahn's *Griechische Märchen*.

THE BATTLE OF THE WHITE BULL.

IF, when you are travelling through countries where wolves are to be heard on winter nights, you should happen to ask a peasant something about them, he will tell you many strange stories of their cleverness, and of the way one wolf will help another to outwit his enemies. If you read this tale you will learn what happened in the Highlands of Scotland in the good old times.

Many herds were feeding in Glen-Ampul, and fine beasts they were, but among them all none was as big and strong as the great white bull, the pride of his master's heart. Bare were the hills, and little shade they gave from the heat of the sun or the fierce storms which beat over them, therefore down below by the side of the burn a hut of turf had been built with a wide door, so that the cattle or their herdsmen might find rest and shelter if they needed it.

One day when the sun streamed hot down the hillside where young Angus was walking with a heavy, old-fashioned gun over his shoulder, he noticed a large wolf coming towards him. Perhaps the gun was more for show than for use, or it may have played Angus some bad tricks before now, for certain it is that, instead of aiming at the wolf who had so suddenly made his appearance at a time of year when he was never looked for, the young man scrambled noiselessly down into the burn, so that he might destroy his scent, and the wolf should not follow him. As it happened, the wolf had not

noticed him at all; but Angus did not know that, and made his way through the water, in the direction of the hut, expecting every moment to hear the baying sound which no one ever forgets who has once listened to it. But all was still, and Angus moved warily on till he came exactly opposite the hut, when he dashed up the bank, and without looking to the right or to the left made straight for the place where he knew the front door to be.

Now, unluckily for him, the great white bull was standing there, enjoying himself after a good dinner which had lasted ever since breakfast. He was thinking of nothing in particular, unless it was where it would be best to go for supper, when suddenly something heavy tumbled across his face. The bull drew back angrily and snorted, and Angus, who had tripped over a hillock and fallen almost on the horns of the bull, began to wonder if this second danger was not worse than the first, when he perceived a clump of clover growing close by, such as all bulls love. Stooping hastily he picked up a handful and thrust it under the bull's nose, nervously watching the creature's eyes, so that he might not be taken unawares. One sniff and the bull lowered his head to examine the clover more narrowly, but soon decided that there was no occasion to eat it in a hurry. This was a great disappointment to Angus, who had hoped that the bull might have shifted his position a little so as to enable him to slip past into the hut, but as the big beast seemed to have forgotten him altogether he stepped cautiously towards the door. Quiet as he was, the bull heard him and looked round. His rolling eyes and quivering nostrils warned Angus to give up his attempt, so he resolved to try if there was any way of entering by the back.

'Oh, this is luck,' thought he, as he beheld a pile of logs standing against the wall to dry. In a moment more he had swung himself up, and lying hidden on the

slope of the roof, with his gun by his side, peered over the top, that he might see what the wolf was doing.

It was a good thing for Angus that he had reached the hut, for the wind had suddenly changed, and had blown the scent of man and beast right into the wolf's nose.

'Fee, fo, fum,' said the wolf to himself, for he had often been told the story of Jack the Giant Killer by his grandmother. 'Fee, fo, fum,' and he crossed the stream at the very spot under the hut by which Angus had passed only a few minutes before. Then he stretched himself out at full length till he looked like one of the bare grey rocks scattered round, only keeping his nose in the air, as he crept silently along, sniffing, sniffing.

Soon he was too close under the hut for Angus to watch him, and he waited with a beating heart, his ears strained to catch the first sound. Then—yap, yap! a roar and a skirling noise, a grey kicking thing flashing through the air, and the wolf was on the further side of the stream, with the bull standing on the other bank pawing the ground and lashing his tail.

'Don't come here again!' he seemed to be saying, and the wolf, who quite understood that 'he who fights and runs away shall live to fight another day,' bounded up the hillside and never stopped to take breath till he had reached the top. Giving a sidelong glance at the bull and breathing a sigh of relief that the stream was still between them, he lay down to rest, with his face towards the hut, on the roof of which Angus was watching.

Like many men whose lives are spent in the open air Angus could see things quite clearly which are hidden from dwellers in houses. Thus he noticed plain signs that the wolf had had the worst of it in his battle with the bull. Every now and then he leaned over and

licked his side, as if he was wounded there, and sometimes he shook his paw, as if it hurt him. But after all



he could not have been very bad, for in a little while he got up and limped away in the direction of a fir-wood, standing thick and black not far behind the hut.

When the wolf could no longer be seen Angus turned to the match with which he set fire to his clumsy old gun, and found to his dismay that it had got wet while he was climbing up the dripping logs, and would not light. Of course it was not in the least like *our* lucifer matches, but was paper soaked in saltpetre, and set alight by a flint, and only burned very slowly. But in spite of all his efforts the powder would not catch, and at length he gave it up in despair.

In this manner half an hour passed away and Angus began to think that his enemy must have gone for good, and that he might do so likewise, when, as he gave one last look up and down the glen before getting down off the roof, he was startled to see *two* large black wolves come out of the wood. So exactly did they keep step, that at first Angus thought they were but one, but as they drew nearer he noticed that the one who limped had a stick in his mouth, the other end of which was held by the second beast.

‘Why, he must be blind!’ exclaimed the young man, and so he was. But blind or not, he made straight for the hut, and then Angus managed to perceive that when they were within a few paces of the hut they dropped the stick and sprang forward. Again they disappeared, and once more the battle with the bull raged, but this time with greater fierceness than before.

One noise succeeded the other, till Angus’s head was in a whirl. Cries, bellows, roars, growlings, then at last a rush and a spring and a heavy fall against the door which shook the hut. After that all was silent, save for angry mumblings of the bull.

‘But what became of the wolves?’ asked the young man to whom the old Highlander had told his story.

‘Heaven knows,’ he answered solemnly, ‘but no

man saw them after that. And Angus just lay on the roof a while longer till he made sure they would not come out again. Then he was off through the heather like a deer, taking care to keep the hut between himself and the bull.

Lays of the Deer-Forest.

THE SERPENTS' GIFT.

MELAMPUS, son of Amythaon and grandson of Eidomene the Wise, lived at Pylos, not far from the famous plain of Olympia, where the Greeks in later times held their celebrated sports. Near his house was a wood, and just outside his door was an oak tree where two serpents had built their nest. Now the servants of Melampus feared the old serpents which reared themselves up and hissed and darted out their tongues when they heard steps below the tree, and at length the terror of both men and women grew so great that they took sticks and killed the snakes. But Melampus would not suffer them to slay the little serpents, as they wished, but gave them milk to drink, which snakes love, and put a warm cloth round the branch when the nights were cold. And the little serpents were grateful and asked each other if there was nothing they could do for him.

For long they pondered in vain, and the months went by, and they grew to be as large as their dead parents. Then at last they thought of a gift which would be dear to the heart of Melampus, a gift that no other man in the land possessed. He should understand the language of birds and of beasts, and some day that knowledge might save his life, as he had saved theirs.

So that night when Melampus slept the three snakes wriggled down from the tree and wriggled in through the open door, and each in turn approached him where he

lay on his back, and licked the insides of his ears, though he knew it not. And when he awoke in the morning and heard the birds talking and asking each other where the best food was to be found, and if the still hot air meant a storm before nightfall, he wondered what had befallen him. And he wondered still more when he listened to the talk of the goats and the murmurs of the dogs who grumbled to each other at having to follow their master when they would rather lie in the sun, and at not being allowed to follow him when he went to the temple.

Now Melampus had a brother named Bias who dwelt with him in his house, and Bias longed to wed Pero, daughter of Neleus, the fairest of the maidens of the West of Greece. Straight and tall was she, and a swift runner, and famous among her friends as a catcher of balls. Many young men sought her in marriage, but Neleus would listen to none. His son-in-law, he said, should be the man who brought him from distant Thessaly the herd of great white oxen which Iphiclus the king had received from his mother; and this was no light thing to ask, for the herd grazed in a field with a wall twenty feet high all round it, and were guarded by a dog the size of a lion, whose eyes were always open and whose teeth were sharp.

Yet, many as were the perils that beset the journey to that far country, and great as were the dangers of the adventure, not a few undertook it for love of Pero, but none had ever returned to their homes.

Thus when Bias, son of Amythaon besought Neleus to give him Pero to wife, he received the same answer as the rest: 'Go then to Thessaly and bring me back the herd of white oxen which belong to Iphiclus, and you shall have her. And gladly will I give her to you, for I like you well. But I have sworn, as you know, this oath, and I cannot break it.'

And with this Bias was forced to be content, and he

left the house of Neleus to ask counsel of his brother, and the eyes of Pero watched him as he went.



PERO FAMOUS AMONG HER FRIENDS AT CATCHING THE BALL.

Melampus was sitting in the wood listening to the talk of the birds when Bias found him.

'Be of good courage,' said he. 'Pero shall be your bride and sit at your hearth, but first you must have patience. As to the herd of white oxen, I will get them for you, but not by skill or guile. The baying of the great dog will awaken Iphiclus, and he will come out armed with a spear. But as I shall not seek to flee or to defend myself I shall not be harmed, only for a year I shall remain in captivity. And now leave me, for I have much to do before I can set out.'

The face of Bias shone with joy as he heard the words of Melampus, for well he knew that what his brother promised that would he perform. The rest of the day he spent in sharpening the spear of Melampus and in looking to the harness of the horses which were to draw his chariot, that the leather reins should not snap nor the thongs be broken. At sunrise he led forth the team and placed them between the shafts, and then Melampus mounted and drove away to the country whence he and his brother had come, and where their forefathers had lived and died.

For six days Melampus journeyed, spending the nights lying on the ground under the sky, for it was summer and the sun beat hotly down, and the cool darkness rested him and gave him strength. At evening on the sixth day he came to the mountains of Othrys and knew that at their foot lay the pasture-ground of the white oxen. Then he loosened the harness of his horses, and fastened them to a tree, while he fell asleep for a few hours.

The dawn was whitening the sky as he rose up, and with his spear in his hand set forth on his quest. From the top of a little hill he looked upon them, thirty huge beasts with hides as white as milk, and wide grey horns branching away. Then his glance fell on the dog, black as night, which guarded the gate, his eyes gazing

this way and that, his paws, big and hairy as a boar's, stretched out before him.

Silently Melampus crept down the hill, and stole along in the shadow till he was opposite the gateway. Not till that moment did the dog know of his presence, and with a great howl he sprang towards Melampus. But the chain that bound him to the gate was strong, and he stopped with a jerk, still baying furiously, though not until Iphiclus had heard and understood and hurried to the pasture, grasping his spear.

Shouting angry words, he flung himself upon Melampus, who stood facing the dog, with his back to Iphiclus, pretending not to be aware of the king's approach, though his gift of prophecy had told him from the first the manner of his capture. He struggled a little in the arms of Iphiclus, that the lord of the oxen might not think him a weakling; then slaves arrived with cords and bound him hand and foot, and thrust him into the prison which held the robbers for whom Thessaly was famous.

In this prison Melampus remained for a year, as he had foretold to Bias; but his gaoler, finding him gentle of mood, loosed his bonds and brought him food from his own house, and oil to rub his limbs, so that when the time of his captivity was over he might still be able to run and wrestle with other men. And for this Melampus promised him a great reward when he should return to Pylos.

The last day of the year had come, when Melampus said to his gaoler:

'There are wood-worms in this prison; everywhere they have eaten through the beams, and to-night the house will fall in a tempest of wind, and all in it will perish,' for Melampus had heard the wood-worms saying this among themselves. 'Take me, therefore, to Iphiclus the king, that he may set me free, lest my kins-

folk, who are many in the land of Thessaly, will avenge me on him.'

'I will go first,' answered the gaoler, 'and tell him somewhat concerning you and your prophecies, and that I have proved that what you have foretold has come true.'

'Go then,' replied Melampus, 'and see you do not tarry,' and the gaoler went.

Iphielus listened in silence to the tale of the gaoler, and put questions to him, to be sure that his story was true. When it was done, he thought for a little, and at last he said :

'Bring out Melampus, and any others who are in the prison, and put them in a place of safety for this one night, that I may see what befalls. In the morning I will speak with him.'

And so it was done.

At midnight a fierce wind suddenly sprang up, and the houses of the city trembled in their foundations, but the prison alone rocked so greatly that it fell. As soon as this was told him, Iphielus left his palace and hastened to examine the beams of the walls, and found it was even as Melampus had said, and that the wood-worms had eaten through them.

'Bring the prisoner Melampus before me,' he cried, and when Melampus was brought he turned to him and said :

'You have gifts and knowledge beyond other men. Tell me, will the desire of my heart be fulfilled and shall I have a son ?'

'And what reward wilt you bestow on me if you have a son ?' asked Melampus.

'Anything in my kingdom,' said Iphielus.

'Well, to-morrow you shall know,' replied Melampus, 'but for this night I must go free, as the gods have not yet shown me whether you will have a son or not.' And in that he spake truly.

When it was dark, Melampus wandered forth among



BIAS - BRINGS - THE - OXEN - OF - IPHICLVS - TO - NELEVS

BOOK 2

the woods on the mountains, till he grew weary and sat himself down under a tree, where he fell asleep. And while he slept two vultures perched on a bough near him and began to talk, and at the sound of their voices Melampus awoke and listened. It was of Iphiclus the king they were speaking and of what would happen at his death.

'If he only knew what he must do to have a son!' sighed one. 'It is so easy.'

'Yes, verily,' answered the other; 'he has only to draw out the knife his father threw at him from the tree in which it is sticking. But men have no wisdom,' and they flew away.

Then Melampus jumped up and hastened to the palace of Iphiclus.

'I can read your riddle, O king,' he said, 'and it is this: Draw out the knife which your father in anger threw at you when you were a boy, and which, missing you, stuck in a tree in the wood where you were hunting, and then shall you have a son,' said Melampus. 'And in return thou shalt give me the herd of white oxen. But take heed, if you break your word the curses of your father will work the ruin of you and of your son also.'

'What are the finest oxen in the world to a son?' asked Iphiclus, and he commanded that they should be given to Melampus, and ordered slaves to go with him and drive them back to Pylos.

Great was the joy of Bias when the shining hides of the oxen came over the plain. That night they rested in the meadows of Melampus and were fed on all the food which oxen deem the choicest. Next morning Bias rose early and rubbed down their sides till the snow on Mount Pelion was not whiter than they, and he himself guided them over the softest grass till they reached the dwelling of Neleus, where stood Pero arrayed in her fairest garments.

‘Little did I expect ever to see those oxen within these gates,’ cried Neleus ; ‘but tell me, how did your brother succeed where everyone else has failed and died ?’ and at the question the face of Bias reddened.

‘I know not,’ he answered ; ‘I did not think to ask him. I only thought of Pero.’

MELEAGER THE HUNTER

IN Calydon, the fairest city of the kingdom of Ætolia, Althea the queen lay on a pile of silk cushions with her seven-days-old baby beside her. Meleager was his name, and he was large of limb and had golden hair and brave blue eyes. He lay alone with his mother, as her maidens had left her to rest, first laying a fresh log across the ashes on the hearth, for the wind blew keenly. Full of joy and peace was the heart of Althea; no mother in all Ætolia had a son like hers, thought she, and she began to dream of the years to come, and of the strength and beauty that should be his. And as she dreamed her dreams the door opened softly and three women entered, old and bent and grey, holding in their hands distaffs—long sticks woven round with the wool with which they spun the fate of men. Silently they walked, spinning as they went, and they sat themselves round the hearth, spinning, spinning.

‘The spinning women,’ whispered the queen to herself, and feared, she knew not why.

‘This is for strength,’ said the first, as she spun her thread.

‘And this for beauty,’ said the second, spinning her thread likewise.

‘And this for life,’ said the third grey woman. ‘The child shall live till the burning brand of wood on the hearth has wholly burned away into ashes.’

Then the women rose and glided away, and as they

passed the child Meleager laughed up in their grim grey faces, and put out his hands to catch the loose threads that were hanging from the distaffs.

The door opened noiselessly and the women vanished through it. Were they women indeed, or only



shadows? Althea sprang from her bed, and seizing a bowl of water which stood near, she flung it on the burning wood and trod with her naked feet on the dying flames and beat them with her hands till nought remained save a black patch on the oaken brand.

Then she placed the brand in a chest made of cedar wood inlaid with ivory and silver, and locked it with a key with a golden handle, and piled garments above, that none might know where the brand was hidden.

Meleager the child grew up and became a man, and in all the land of Greece was none braver or more skilful than he, to cast spear, or strike with sword. From far and wide men came to beg his aid, and he sailed with Jason in the ship *Argo* over the black waters, to bring back the Golden Fleece from distant Colchis. At the funeral games held in Ætolia or in neighbouring Locris he was ever to be met, and won the swords and gold and vessels of bronze away from his friends. And all watched him with awe, for neither spear nor arrow pierced his flesh, no matter how deadly the combat.

But at length, in an evil hour, the father of Meleager, Ceneus the king, gathered in his harvest of corn and of olives and fruits from the plains of Ætolia, and stored them in his barns without offering to Artemis the goddess the portion that was her due. Then she arose in her wrath and sent a boar, huge and mighty as a mountain flood, to lay waste the land of Ætolia, and to root up the trees, and to trample down the first shoots of the young wheat. With the coming of the white-tusked boar, fear stalked abroad in the country of Calydon, and mothers kept their children close shut within their houses, lest they should stray in the path of the great beast and be trodden under his feet, or be pierced by the tusks which stuck out long on each side of his mouth. Even the men only ventured out in bands, and looked to their spears that there was no flaw in the shafts.

Thus it was when Meleager returned home from fighting in a war in the south country, across the Gulf of Corinth. Full of anger was he when he beheld the white faces of the people, and he sent messengers to the cities

round, bidding their young men come and bring their dogs with them, that they might hasten to Calydon and slay the boar which had wrought such evil on their lands. And the young men listened, and swiftly they drove their light two-horsed chariots over the mountains and across the rivers, and last of all came one whom Meleager had not bidden—Atalanta, the fleet-footed, from the far land of Arcadia. Greatly they wondered to see her, as all Greece had heard the fame of her races with her lovers, for she vowed she would only marry the man who could beat her in the foot-race. Atalanta was the most beautiful girl in Greece, and most dear of all her friends to the goddess Artemis, who chased the deer all night in the forests. But Atalanta had been beaten at last in the race by the cunning of Meilanion, who had tempted her to pause and gather up the golden apples from the tree of Aphrodite, which he flung behind him. Now she came to Ætolia, and there she stood with her hounds held in a leash beside her, and the young men wondered at her beauty, and yet each hoped that, though she was so swift a runner and so good an archer, he would be before her in the hunt, and be first to strike the boar, for it was then the rule of hunting that whoever first struck the stag or boar had the honour of winning its head and hide to hang up in his hall.

The boar was strong, swift and cunning, and long was the chase through forests and over mountains and across rivers, till it headed back again to the plain of Calydon. There the fight was fierce, and many a man and dog was stretched on the field, and the boar drew back to give a mighty rush into the midst of the rest. The young men stood still as if they had gazed on the face of the Gorgon Medusa and become stone images, but Atalanta ran forward in front of them all, and let fly an arrow with a sharp head of bronze, and the arrow stuck deep in the flank of the boar. Then they all



HOW ATALANTA AND MELEAGER SLEW THE WILD BOAR OF CALEDON J.F.

knew that his hide and tusky head must by right be the prize of the maiden, for she had been the first to draw the boar's blood.

But he, with the bristles standing up on his back like iron wires, dashed straight at the crowd of hunters, and few would have seen that day's sunset had not Meleager barred the way. As the breath of the boar swept over his cheek he struck his lance deep through its leathern hide, into its lowest rib, and with a yell the monster rolled upon the ground, shaking the earth as if it were rent asunder.

In this manner the boar was slain, and Meleager bade the young men cut off its head and strip its skin from its body and give them to Atalanta. But on this saying great strife arose, especially among the tribe of the Curetes, the people of Althea, mother of Meleager. The brothers of Althea laid claim to the hide for themselves, and spake rough words to Atalanta, till the anger of Meleager was kindled, and he slew them where they stood.

Then Atalanta set forth to return to Arcadia, and Meleager went back to Calydon to tell of the death of the boar.

When Althea the queen heard that her brothers were slain she wept bitter tears and would not suffer Meleager to enter into her presence. So he called the young men round him to fight the Curetes, who, to avenge the sons of Thestias, brothers of Althea, had attacked the kingdom of Ætolia. And wherever Meleager was victory lay, and no walls could keep him out of a city, neither could any spear wound him. And word was brought to Meleager that his mother had poured out curses upon him for the death of her brethren, and in wrath he left the fight, and returned to his house in Calydon and to Cleopatra his wife, and would suffer no man to approach him. Yet even so tales reached his ears, how that his mother wept night and day, and prayed that some evil

might come upon him—not death, for his life was in the brand and in her own hands.

The tide of battle went sorely against the men of *Ætolia*, and the *Curetes* battered against the gates of *Calydon*, and the elders of the city shook their heads, and whispered that they had never dared to be so bold had *Meleager* stood on the walls. Then certain of them went to the house of *Meleager*, and entreated him, and offered him rich gifts of land for corn and vineyards if he would beat back the *Curetes*, but he would not; and the priests besought him, and his sisters, but he would not; and last of all came his mother with words of repentance for the curses she had uttered, but to her his heart was harder than a millstone. So she returned to her palace and locked the door of her room behind her, and none saw her till two days had passed.

It was *Cleopatra*, his wife, who at length prevailed on him, with her stories of the fate of a city when foes are within its gates, and the women and children are borne away captive. His soul melted within him when he thought that this also might be the doom of *Cleopatra* and his sons and daughters now at play in the courtyard. Silently he rose, and silently he buckled on his shining breastplate and seized his spears, and once more he stood on the walls where the fight was thickest. But *Althea*, his mother, knew nought of it. At the sight of him the men of *Calydon* took courage, and the *Curetes* fell back, and the elders, watching, whispered again together, but this time they said that now the gift of corn land need never be paid, as *Calydon* was safe without it.

So the men of the *Curetes* fled back to their own country, and not one who was alive remained at the gates of *Calydon*. And the citizens crowded around *Meleager*, fair-haired and tall, clad in shining bronze, and gave him thanks for themselves, and for their wives and children. But as he listened their words



seemed to Meleager to fade in his ears, and their faces to grow dim, as if a cloud came between them, and a fire burned in his veins, and he staggered and fell.

‘Unloose his armour ; he is wounded,’ cried they, though even as they said it they wondered, for never had spear or sword pierced his skin. But when the armour was unbuckled no wound could be found, not so much as a scratch, yet still the strength of Meleager was passing away, and the whiteness of wax spread over his face.

‘He is dying,’ they murmured ; then, ‘he is dead, he, Meleager, who hath saved us ! But why ? Wherefore ?’ And no man knew.

If they had entered the locked room of Althea the queen in her palace they would have been answered, for there she was, on her knees before a burning log, which she had drawn from out of the chest in which it had lain hidden for five-and-twenty years. Snatching a stick from the hearth, she had set the log alight, not knowing that her son had repented him and had in the end gone forth to fight the Curetes. And as the flames crackled and the wood burned the life of Meleager was consumed, as the spinning women had foretold when he was a baby and had laughed and played with the threads they had spun. It was not for long that Althea knelt watching, for the log burned quickly, and as the last spark flickered out the voice of Ceneus her husband was heard at the door.

‘Open : Meleager has saved the city and is dead. We have brought him home : come thou and mourn for him !’

THE VANISHING OF BATHURST

BENJAMIN BATHURST was thought both a very clever and a very fortunate young man. He was the son of a bishop, the Bishop of Norwich, a hundred years ago ; and a hundred years ago bishops had 'little to do and plenty to get.' When he was only twenty-five Benjamin was the husband of a beautiful wife, whose Christian name was Phillida, and the father of three 'angel children ;' and we can be sure that they really were angel children, because Mrs. Bathurst herself says so, in a letter to a friend. Very few young men at the age of twenty-five have wives and three children.

But Benjamin Bathurst was not only lucky ; he was believed, by the English King and Government, to be both very clever and extremely brave. This is certain, for the Government sent him early in the year 1809 on an adventure which only a brave and clever man could attempt with much hope of succeeding.

At that time the famous Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte was master of almost all the countries in Europe. He had beaten the Austrians, the Prussians, and the Russians. He made his brothers and his generals kings of the countries that he had conquered, and, though the Russians did not really love him, still they did not wish to offend him, nor did the Emperor of Austria, Francis, the brother of Queen Marie Antoinette, whose head had been cut off in the French Revolution.

But Napoleon had not conquered England, and England wanted to persuade Austria to make war on Napoleon, while she herself sent an army under Wellington to help Spain and Portugal to rebel against him.

Now this message from England was a dangerous parcel to carry from England through Europe, and when the messenger did reach Vienna, if he succeeded in making the Emperor of Austria beat Napoleon, it was clear that Napoleon would have a grudge against that messenger.

Benjamin Bathurst, young as he was, was sent on this very difficult and dangerous adventure. He succeeded in getting the Austrians to fight the French, but they were terribly beaten in a great battle in July 1809, and had to make peace with Napoleon. There was now nothing for Benjamin to do but return to England, to his wife Phillida and his three children, if he could.

In October he got leave from the English Government to come back.

But he seemed curiously unwilling to take advantage of the permission ; day after day he still lingered on in Vienna, and at last began to hint to his friends of some danger that threatened him, and of some deep grudge that Napoleon had against him. Whether there was any foundation for this idea no one ever knew, but if so, the matter must have been a private one, as Napoleon was not at all likely to attack him merely on account of his position of British envoy, and that, too, when peace was made and Austria lay at his feet. Be this as it may, Bathurst evidently went in terror of his life ; yet he never thought of remaining at Vienna, where he would have been perfectly safe.

After a long hesitation he finally determined to go to Berlin, and from there to Hamburg, where he could get a ship to take him home. Of course it was

a far longer journey than by the road straight to Trieste or Venice, where he was certain of finding some ship bound for Malta, but it seemed to him less dangerous. So, changing his name to Koch, and pretending that he was a merchant travelling on business, he started one night from Vienna, accompanied by his valet, and by his secretary, Krause, who undertook to pass as a courier and to assume the name of Fisher. It is needless to say that Bathurst looked well to the pistols he carried on him, and saw that those in the back of his carriage were properly loaded. Over his grey suit he wore a coat of the most expensive fur, sable lined with purple velvet, and a cap to match, and a valuable diamond pin.

For a man who wished not to be noticed, but to pass as a quiet tradesman, it was odd to dress like a very rich prince.

All seems to have gone well during the long journey from Vienna to Berlin, but instead of Bathurst's spirits rising on that account, they only grew more and more gloomy. Indeed, perhaps the strangest thing about all this strange story is the fact of a young man in Bathurst's position being so cast down by his suspicion of an unknown danger, which would have been only a pleasant excitement to most of his friends.

On November 25 he reached a small town called Perleberg, built on the banks of a little river which flows into the Elbe. He was now nearly half-way between Berlin and Hamburg, and a few hours more would take him to Dömitz, when the danger would be past. But it was just in those few hours that he felt he would run the greatest risks, and to enable him to avoid them the utmost care and caution would be needed. For French troops were quartered at Magdeburg, within reach of his road, and he never doubted that every movement was watched and known.

However, here he was at Perleberg, and entering

the Swan Inn near the gate which opened on the Hamburg road, he ordered dinner and bade fresh horses be ready at the post-house whenever he should wish to start. The post-house, where horses were kept for travellers, lay just inside the gate, and beyond the wall were a few small cottages inhabited by peasants.

After dinner, which was very early, Bathurst sent for the landlord, and questioned him as to the Prussian troops then in Perleberg. They consisted, answered the man, of a squadron of Brandenburg cuirassiers, commanded by Captain Klitzing, who lodged in a house close to the town hall. On hearing this, Bathurst lost no time, but went straight to ask for an interview with Klitzing. He represented himself to the captain as a traveller on his way to Hamburg, and having reason to fear that he was in danger of capture, begged that a guard might be told off to be with him during the short time that he was at the inn. As far as we know, he concealed his name, in case the captain should know it.

Klitzing was not used to young men of this sort, and scoffed at the idea of guards being necessary, but seeing that Bathurst was trembling so violently that he could hardly get into his sable coat, he agreed good-naturedly to let him have the soldiers he wished for. Then the two men parted, and Bathurst returned to the Swan Inn, where he sent an order that the horses, already harnessed and ready for the start, should not be put into the carriage till nightfall. This he did to ensure greater safety, but most probably it would have been better if he had kept to his original plan and pushed on to Dömitz in daylight.

Till seven o'clock he sat in the inn, burning papers and writing letters, but except one half-finished note to his wife, afterwards found in the pocket of his trousers, nothing was heard of the rest. Everything appears to have been perfectly quiet, and the only guests arriving

during the afternoon were two Jewish merchants, who, like Bathurst, alighted at the inn to rest and change horses. But during these hours something, we cannot guess what, must have occurred to lessen Bathurst's fears, as he dismissed the soldiers and ordered the horses for nine o'clock.

As the clock struck the carriage came up to the door. It was a dark night, and the oil lamp suspended across the street cast but a feeble glimmer on the inn. The postillion and the ostler, who carried a horn lantern, were busy fastening the straps of the harness, for the horses had been taken out of the carriage at the moment of arrival and the vehicle left in the road. The secretary, or courier, as he was supposed to be, was standing in the doorway with the landlord, counting out the money for the bill, and Bathurst was waiting till the luggage was tied on behind. When all was ready he went round to the horses' heads, to pat them, seemingly, and the valet opened the carriage door for his master to step in; the landlord, anxious to wish the traveller good speed and get back to his warm stove, stood with his hat in his hand, while the secretary stamped his freezing feet, and wondered what Bathurst could be doing.

At length the waiting and the silence grew so unbearable that someone went round to see why Bathurst did not get into the carriage; but to his amazement no Bathurst was there. When they had all assured themselves that the man who they imagined to have been standing within six feet of them had vanished without a sound or a cry, they thought they must be dreaming, but called loudly again and again. Call as they might, no answer came out of the darkness.

'He must have forgotten something,' suggested one of the bystanders; 'you will find him in his room, of a surety.' But Bathurst was not in his room, and

where he was, or what had happened to him, no one ever knew, and most likely no one ever will know !

In the midst of the confusion the Jewish merchants sent down a message that they wished to start at once, and fresh horses were put in their carriage. Perhaps it might have been as well, considering how very mysterious the whole case was, if the inside of their carriage had been searched ; but in the hurry nobody thought of doing this, and, indeed, when afterwards the merchants were examined, they proved themselves to be prosperous and respectable people, without any motive, as far as can be seen, for desiring to make away with Bathurst.

But the most curious part of the whole story is that Bathurst, though in such mortal terror of his life, did not confide to a single creature what it was that he dreaded, beyond the fact that he expected to be seized by the French ; nor, supposing this to be the case, why he thought they would treat him so much worse than any ordinary prisoner of war.

When they had sought Bathurst vainly about the inn, it became clear to everyone that no time was to be lost in making inquiries outside.

‘Perhaps,’ observed the secretary, only half believing what he said, ‘Mr. Bathurst may have gone back to Captain Klitzing to beg for a guard to accompany us to-night.’ But the messenger sent brought back an answer that he had not been to the captain’s rooms. The strange story, however, coupled with the signs of deadly fear shown by Bathurst in the afternoon, so startled Klitzing that, not content with despatching soldiers on the heels of the messenger to take possession of the carriage and its contents, he hastened himself to the Swan Inn to question the landlord. While he was examining the men belonging to the inn, and the room in which Bathurst had spent

the day, without gaining the smallest information, a chaise was being got ready. The moment it was brought round he entered it with the secretary, placing the valet on the box with a soldier. Then, leaving a guard at the Swan, he drove off to an inn which was as far as possible from the Swan, so as to prevent, as well as he might, any communication being held between the valet and secretary and the people of the Swan till their innocence had been proved, and ordered sentries to be sure that neither the secretary nor the valet quitted their rooms.

By this time it was midnight, and nothing more could be done, but early next morning the search was continued and every hiding-place about the town was examined, as well as the woods and marshes outside the walls, and the little river Stepnitz was dragged. All in vain : not a sign of Bathurst could be discovered, and when by noon everything had been done, Klitzing mounted his horse and rode off to the neighbouring town of Kyritz to take counsel with his colonel. After discussing the matter fully, he proceeded straight to Berlin, a long way from Kyritz, where he told his tale to the government officials and police, and from them received permission to do whatever was necessary to find the missing man.

On Monday he was back again, and ready for a fresh search.

In his first examination one thing and one only had struck him as odd. Here was Bathurst starting on a journey of several hours on a cold winter's night and neglecting, according to the testimony of those who saw him, to wear the warm fur coat in which he had walked to Klitzing's house in the earlier part of the day, and, what was more curious still, the secretary was without *his* travelling cloak also. He fancied, said Krause, when questioned on this point, that both garments must have been left at the post-house

inside the gate, where they first stopped on entering Perleberg.

This, however, Klitzing knew not to be the case, as he himself had seen Bathurst in the sable coat some hours later. Still, before quitting Perleberg on Sunday he had informed the magistrate that this coat could not be found and begged that a search should be made for it, which was done quite fruitlessly. Everyone appears to have taken for granted that when the coat was found Bathurst was certain to be found inside it, and apart from it no effort was made to trace him. Besides, neither the police nor the burgomaster (or mayor) of Perleberg would pay any heed to the authority which Klitzing had obtained from Berlin, and they put all sorts of hindrances in his way. So time was wasted, and Bathurst's chances grew hourly less.

THE FINDING OF THE CLUES.

Still, whatever difficulties they may meet with, men like Klitzing are not easily beaten, and three or four days after the earth had swallowed up Bathurst the sable coat was actually discovered, hidden behind a stack of firewood in a cellar belonging to a family called Schmidt—the coat, but not Bathurst. The story told by the woman Schmidt when asked how it had come into her hands was a very lame one, and she was at once sent to prison till further information could be got. According to Frau Schmidt she had found the coat in the post-house, and had carried it away and given it to her scapegrace son Augustus. What she was doing at the post-house, who gave her leave to take the coat, and how she was able to bring it home without its being recognised, are questions no one seems to have thought of putting to her; but a woman came forward to say that she had seen a strange man answering to the description of Bathurst going down the lane where the Schmidts lived, so

Augustus Schmidt the son was arrested and inquiries made as to his movements. His story was as confused as the other. His mother, he said, had been sent by the strange man who had come to their house to buy powder for his pistols, therefore he supposed he must have shot himself. But in the orders for a close search of rivers and canals issued by Klitzing on November 30 he remarks that he had discovered that Augustus Schmidt, whom he had arrested, was not at home at nine o'clock on the evening of November 25, the hour of Bathurst's disappearance, and stated that it was the duty of the authorities to look into the matter. This was really what the authorities never did. They thought that Klitzing was interfering in what did not concern him, and Klitzing considered that they were stupid and fussy. So for a fortnight they continued to drag the ponds and to examine houses, and even to turn the river Stepnitz into a new bed, but Schmidt and his mother were merely condemned to two months' imprisonment for stealing the fur coat, and then left alone.

Three weeks went by, and on the morning of December 16 two Perleberg women who were picking up sticks in a wood (which had also been searched) outside the gates, were surprised to see near the path a good pair of trousers carefully turned inside out and laid out on the ground as if to dry. They took them up and examined them closely, and found that they were drenched through and stained with earth. Two bullets had evidently passed through them, although no blood was to be noticed anywhere, and in the pocket of one trouser was a paper with writing on it, and this was wet also.

Of course the wood-pickers, like everyone else in Perleberg, had been greatly excited by the mystery of Bathurst's disappearance, and at once guessed that the trousers were his. Tying their faggots together and rolling the trousers up in a bundle they went straight to

the burgomaster, who on looking at the letter in the pocket found it was from Bathurst to his wife. It was in pencil and unfinished, so it could not have been one of those which he had written in the afternoon of November 25 in the Swan Inn. It merely told her that owing to the plots of the Comte d'Entraigues (once a French spy in England) he felt certain he would be captured before he could reach English soil, and entreated her not to take a second husband should he never return. Then the letter broke off abruptly, as if the writer had been unexpectedly stopped—as perhaps he was.

It was only now that the Bathurst family in England were informed through Lord Wellesley of the young envoy's disappearance, of which the Government had just heard. A reward of 2000*l.* was instantly offered for his discovery, dead or alive, or even for intelligence as to his fate, but this led to nothing, except a quantity of contradictory stories. One account declared that he had managed to get to the coast, and was drowned on his way to Sweden; another that his valet had murdered him, and escaped afterwards in a boat down the Elbe—certain it is that after November 25 nothing was ever heard of the man.

Then Mrs. Bathurst, wife of the envoy, went to seek her husband in the spring of 1810, and, having entered Germany from Sweden, obtained in Berlin a safe-conduct from Napoleon. At Berlin she met Röntgen, who for some months had been making a close search, by her directions. From a lady living in Magdeburg he learned that the governor of the city had informed her that the English ambassador for whom everyone was hunting was a captive in his charge. Upon this Mrs. Bathurst hastened to the governor, but neither then nor later would he admit the truth of the lady's statement, though he acknowledged having made the remark to her.

'What I said was a mistake,' was all that could be

got out of him. 'I found afterwards that the real name of the man was Louis Fritz, and that he was a spy of Canning's, who had been captured by a band of soldiers scouring the country.'

'Let me see Louis Fritz,' said Mrs. Bathurst.

'He is gone to Spain.'

'Then let me see his wife.'

'She is gone with him,' and in despair Mrs. Bathurst left him and returned to Paris. Here the Emperor gave her leave to advertise for her husband in all the French papers, which only increased her suspicions that he had something to hide; for in those days England, like the rest of Europe, stood in such terror of Napoleon that any story against him, however absurd, was held good enough to believe. But no answer came to the advertisements, and after six months' absence Mrs. Bathurst returned to England, weary and disheartened.

Her first act on reaching London was to send Röntgen to Canning, begging him to let her know if any passport had been granted in the previous year (1809) to a man named Louis Fritz. In reply, she received a message that no person called Louis Fritz had ever applied for a passport at the office. This caused Mrs. Bathurst's spirits to revive, for if her husband was alive in the fortress of Magdeburg she might one day see him again. But an end was soon put to her hopes. Very shortly a visit was paid her by Comte d'Entraigues—the very Comte d'Entraigues mentioned in her husband's half-finished letter, the man whom he feared would be his ill-doing—and he abruptly told her that she might put on widow's weeds as soon as she liked, for her husband had died in Magdeburg.

Mrs. Bathurst heard him with alarm, but not with entire faith, and asked him for proofs of her husband's death and particulars as to how it had come about. He answered that on leaving Perleberg, Bathurst had been seized by some mounted soldiers and conveyed to

Magdeburg, and that the governor, having written for orders to Fouché, chief of the French police, had received instructions to put him out of the way. Still Mrs. Bathurst did not feel satisfied, and declared that his bare word was not enough for her. D'Entraigues then offered to write in cipher to Paris and promised to show her the reply, which the poor woman awaited anxiously; but at the very time when it was expected to arrive he and his wife were suddenly murdered by a new French servant, who then killed himself. This was also considered to be the work of the French Government, furious at their spy d'Entraigues having betrayed them, though it will appear to any reasonable person that with the many wars on his hands it was hardly likely that Napoleon would take so much trouble over what concerned one private individual.

As to Bathurst's condition of mind before he quitted Vienna, his wife expressly remarks in a letter which tells of her adventures, that 'she does not deny that he was in a state of excitement,' but we do not know the reasons he had for excitement, or what letters he had received to warn him of danger. He was acting imprudently by travelling in an enemy's country under a feigned name. It seems that he suspected the king's messenger, Krause (the secretary), because he found a bill for 500*l.* on him, and feared that after all the man might be bribed to give him up.

For months and years the search continued, but not a trace of Bathurst was ever found, though some suspicious circumstances did come to light. In the March after his disappearance, a friend writes from Hamburg to Mrs. Bathurst stating that 'not the least proof exists of his being deranged, murdered or detained a prisoner,' adding that he 'knew from a witness' that the trousers had been placed near the path in the wood on purpose, and also that while at Berlin Bathurst was

warned that Krause was not to be trusted. Of course this may have been intended, as his wife thought, to induce him to discharge a man who was really faithful, so as to leave the master at the mercy of his enemies—or it may have been true. Krause himself declared that Bathurst had been standing about in the kitchen, while the horses were brought from the post-house, warming himself at the fire, constantly looking at his watch and even pulling out his purse, in the midst of a crowd of stablemen and postillions. Considering the terror which possessed Bathurst, such conduct sounds very unlikely, although the ostler, says Krause, who was present at the time, also disappeared, and was never afterwards heard of.

Six years later the search was opened afresh by Mr. Underwood, a friend of the family, but with no greater success than before; and indeed it is curious how many people from whom clues might have been obtained died before they had a chance of giving their information. Besides d'Entraigues, Mr. Röntgen had also expired by the time Mr. Underwood reached Paris, but Dr. Armstrong, another untiring seeker after the unfortunate Bathurst, told Underwood that he had visited Perleberg himself, and that everybody there was quite convinced that Bathurst had been robbed and murdered before he passed the walls, and that the murderer was a man whom both himself and Johnson had examined.

It is very disappointing that Underwood does not say a word to inform us *who* the man was, but most people will agree that the explanation is probably the right one. Klitzing always held this view, and he knew more about it than anyone.

But though the good Perlebergers were quite determined as to how and why Bathurst died, they were by no means of one mind as to who killed him. Some declared it was Augustus Schmidt, the possessor of the

fur coat, others that it was one Hacker, a shoemaker and keeper of a low tavern near the post-house ; but whatever the talk, there was nothing to bring the crime home to either of them. It was not till the year 1852 that a discovery was made which seemed really important, and it happened in this wise.

An old house near Perleberg, on the road to Hamburg, was pulled down for repairs, and underneath the kitchen a skeleton was found, stripped naked, and with its skull fractured as if from the blow of an axe. Of course there would have been nothing to connect this skeleton with Bathurst but for the fact that the father of the former owner, Mertens by name, had been a servant at the Swan on the night of the fatal November 25. No suspicion had fallen on him at the time, and indeed he was much thought of in the town, and it does not appear to have been considered strange that he was able to give his two daughters marriage portions which were large for girls in their class.

A few months after the finding of the body Mrs. Thistlethwaite, Bathurst's sister, came to Perleberg, and was shown the skull of the newly discovered skeleton. She positively denied that it *could* be the skull of her brother, although it seems a difficult matter to swear to after forty-three years. If she was right, then the story remains as mysterious in its end as in the beginning, but after reading the tale and considering the evidence, most of us will share Captain Klitzing's opinion, and believe that when Bathurst was standing in the dark at the horses' heads he was struck dead from behind and carried away silently to a safe place, where all his valuables were taken from him.

Since the above story was written, in August 1910, a skeleton has been dug up near Perleberg which it was considered might be that of Bathurst, though the reasons for this opinion were not very clear. The discovery gave rise to a correspondence in which many interesting particulars were disclosed, but none that really threw any definite light on the matter.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE GUILLOTINE

IN 1769, the year in which Wellington and Napoleon were born, the wife of a shopkeeper called Lavalette had a little son in Paris. The parents were very proud of him, and thought him a wonder, as parents often do ; and, indeed, they were not so much mistaken as they sometimes are, for he was a lively baby, and soon began to take notice of what went on around him. As he grew older, he was never so happy as when he had a book in his hand, so his father thought it was quite clear that he was intended to become a priest, and saved every penny in order to give his son a good education, while his mother dressed him like a little abbé.

This was all very well when he was still a boy, but as soon as he began to think for himself he made up his mind that he did not want to be an abbé at all ; he would rather be a lawyer, he said. So he began to go to lectures and to read law books, till he was nearly twenty, when the Revolution broke out, and the prison of the Bastille was taken. Young Lavalette with a band of his friends was present at that great sight, and eagerly welcomed the captives who were released that day, for a new France was born, he thought, and everyone was to be free and happy. He enlisted in the National Guard, which was to keep order and prevent the nobles from oppressing the people ; but by-and-by he found that the men who were now

governing France in the name of Liberty were quite as tyrannical as those who governed it in the name of the king, while nobody's life was safe if his neighbour had a spite against him and denounced him as an aristocrat or noble.

When he told his friends that all the bloodshed which was going on filled him with horror they could hardly believe their ears. 'What,' they cried, 'desert the cause of the people, and throw in his lot with that villain Louis Capet, once known as Louis XVI., and his wife, the Austrian woman, who would have her balls and amusements though her subjects paid for them with their blood? No, no! there was an end to all that, and let others take example lest——' But Lavalette broke in impatiently, and said all that was wild talk, and he was tired of hearing it. That whatever the kings before him might have done, Louis XVI. had never hurt anybody, and the queen was a beautiful woman, and he would be proud to die for her. And he very nearly did, for he stood by the side of the Swiss guards defending the royal family when the palace of the Tuileries was attacked by the mob in 1792.

And Napoleon was sitting in the gardens with a friend, and watched it all.

The taking of the Tuileries seemed to let loose all the worst passions of the people, and after the horrors of the September massacres Lavalette enlisted in a regiment that was serving abroad, together with his friend Bertrand and a few other comrades. Every large town they passed through was in a state of wild excitement, and, after many adventures, Lavalette was thankful indeed to reach the place where his regiment was stationed. He began at once to learn his work, and to master every branch of it, and as men who were energetic and capable came rapidly to the front in those days, it was not long before he was made

a sergeant, while his colonel himself taught him how to map out the countries they went through, and the way to fortify a town or camp.

Soon he ceased to be a common soldier, and received the rank of lieutenant. Like many young men, though dauntlessly brave when actually fighting, it was a severe trial to his courage to sit still on his horse amidst a shower of bullets. 'I even sometimes caught myself taking a circuit when I might have pushed straight-forwards,' he says. He was horribly ashamed of himself on these occasions, and in the end got the better of his fears. But, he adds, 'it was by no means the work of a day. How often had I to turn back and take my place in the thick of the fire ! But when I had stayed there a good while I was pleased with myself, and what can be nicer than that ? '

Certainly, he must have got over all desire to run away when Napoleon made him his aide-de-camp in Italy after the battle of Arcole. Henceforth the General always stood his friend, and when he was wounded, went up to him and said before the whole army, 'Lavalette, you are a brave fellow, and when I write the history of this campaign I will not forget you.'

The heart of Lavalette glowed. Was it possible for any man to be a coward after that ?

No man ever lived with such a keen eye for the characters of the men he came across as Napoleon, and it was to this fact that he owed so much of his success. Except when family pride misled him into placing his brothers in positions for which they were not fitted, he gave to every man the work he was best able to do. He found Lavalette to be modest and considerate of other people's feelings, quick to notice, and capable of giving wise advice, besides being an excellent soldier. So he was often sent on missions where a pleasant manner and prudent words were necessary,

and where a blunt speech might spoil all the General's deep-laid plans. Lavalette could always be trusted, and at last Napoleon began to think he should like him for a relation, as well as a friend.

Now, busy as he was, Napoleon was as fond of arranging marriages as any old lady, and paid scanty attention to the feelings of the two people concerned. Just as the army was about to start for Egypt, the General informed his aide-de-camp that he had found the very wife for him, and the next morning they should be introduced to each other.

'A wife?' exclaimed Lavalette in dismay. 'But we are on the eve of a war! And as likely as not I shall be killed, and she will be left a widow.'

'Well, if she is, she will be the widow of one of my aides-de-camp, and have her pension and be received everywhere. As it is, though she is pretty and charming and clever, no one will have anything to say to her, because she is the daughter of one of the emigrated nobles who deserted France. Even Josephine, my wife, can do nothing for her. Come, it is no use talking! Within a week you must be married, and there will be just time for you to have a fortnight's holiday before we sail.'

'But the young lady?' asked Lavalette, who was feeling quite bewildered. 'Not even for you, my General, will I marry a girl who does not wish for me.'

'Oh, that is all right. She must be tired of school by this time, and will be only too glad to live at Fontainebleau with her grandfather while you are away. You won't be killed, I know, and in two years you will be back—a general yourself, perhaps.'

'But who is she?' said Lavalette, who felt quite helpless.

'Didn't I tell you? Mademoiselle Emilie de Beauharnais, daughter of the Marquis de Beauharnais, brother-in-law of my wife. She is at present at school

at Madame Campan's with my step-daughter Hortense. We will drive you there ourselves and introduce you.'

It was a shy and awkward young man who followed Napoleon, Josephine and her son Eugène Beauharnais into the garden at Madame Campan's. In honour of the visit the girls had been given a holiday, and somehow or other had guessed the reason. So every window was crowded with heads, each one eager to know if the choice was to fall upon *her*, while Lavalette, who managed to see a good deal without looking, was wondering on his side which of them was his future wife. At last Hortense Beauharnais stepped out of the long drawing-room window, followed by a tall graceful girl with a lovely complexion. Without taking any notice of Lavalette, who stood a little apart, they greeted Josephine and Napoleon, and then Eugène proposed that they should have lunch on the grass. This delighted the young people, and by the time they had laid the cloth and set out the luncheon things they had become quite friendly.


When coffee had been handed round by Eugène they all got up, and Emilie de Beauharnais felt her cousin's hand on her arm and was gently led into a walk at some distance from the house. In a few minutes they were joined by Lavalette, and with a bow and smile Eugène left them together, and Lavalette spoke.

'You have heard, mademoiselle, of the flattering proposal made me by your uncle the General. *You* belong to the *noblesse*; my father was a shopkeeper, and I have nothing to offer you but my sword. Hardly even myself,' he added, smiling, 'for in a fortnight I must leave you, perhaps to go to my death. I feel that I could love you with all my soul, but if you think you cannot love *me*—well, I will take care that the General shall not visit his anger upon you!'

While he was speaking Emilie had been nervously

playing with some roses on a bush close by. When he ceased she remained silent for a moment or two ; then



 *Lavalette & Emilie in the Garden*

she broke off one of the roses and held it out to him. This was almost more than he expected. Filled with

joy, he stooped down and kissed her hand, then together they went slowly back to the rest.

Eight days later they were married, not only in the presence of the mayor, but secretly by a priest in the chapel of a convent, for Emilie would be content with nothing else. But Napoleon's promised holiday of a fortnight dwindled into less than a week, as the army was hastening to embark for Egypt.

During twelve years Lavalette followed the fortunes of Napoleon, and his brilliant services both in battle and on the various missions entrusted to him by the Emperor earned for him the title of Count. Between the various campaigns he returned joyfully to his wife, or, whenever it was possible, she came to join him. After the abdication of Napoleon in 1814 he, like Marshal Ney and many other generals, swore allegiance to Louis XVIII., but with the landing of the Emperor from Elba all things were forgotten and Lavalette was aide-de-camp once more.

After Waterloo, when all was lost, and Louis XVIII. again entered Paris, a general pardon was offered to those who had broken their vows and fought by the side of Napoleon. There were, however, a few exceptions; one of these was Ney, and another was Lavalette.

So little did the Count guess that his life was forfeited that he made no effort to escape, as he might easily have done. He remained quietly at home, and was dining with his wife when he was arrested by the police and taken to a temporary prison, where he was kept for a week before his removal to the Conciergerie, where Queen Marie Antoinette spent her last days. Here for six weeks he saw no one but the turnkey, and him only once in twenty-four hours; he had no books, and there was hardly light to have read them had they been given him, though by straining his eyes

he contrived to make out his letters, which had, of course, been opened by the officials. His wife tried to keep up his spirits by writing that she was perfectly well, but as he knew that she would never complain, however ill she might be, he received little comfort from her words.

As far as we can learn, his gaolers were kind, and permitted their prisoner many small indulgences. He was now and then allowed an interview with a friend, provided the prison clerk was present. Occasionally they let him see Marshal Ney, who was also confined in the Conciergerie, and though Ney knew very well that death awaited him shortly, he was very cheerful, and passed his time in playing the flute. His friends and fellow-prisoners listened eagerly for the notes which told them the Marshal was still alive. One day in November the flute was silent: Ney had gone to his trial, and three weeks later was shot as a traitor to his king.

In that same month of November Lavalette was also brought before the court, and was sentenced to die on the guillotine. His friends, some of whom were in positions of trust about the king, did all in their power to obtain a pardon, and high were their hopes when Louis consented to receive Madame Lavalette, whose father had, like himself, been an *émigré*. But it all ended in nothing, and Lavalette had only three days left to live.

It was Tuesday night, and the Count said to his gaoler, who was moving distractedly about the cell, 'It is usually on Friday, is it not, that the executions take place?'

'Sometimes on Thursday,' answered the man in a low voice, looking away.

'And the time is four in the afternoon?' asked Lavalette again.

'Sometimes in the morning,' answered the gaoler, opening the door quickly, so that nothing more might be said.

And Lavalette understood.

In these last days his wife was allowed to come every evening at six o'clock and dine with him. She had suffered terribly during the last four months, but still retained her old energy. When she was alone with her husband she told him of a plan she had formed—the same as that employed by Lady Nithsdale a hundred years before—by which Lavalette was to escape disguised as a woman. It was in vain that he assured her it was absurd and impossible; that the gaolers knew him too well; that the guards were too numerous, and a thousand other things.

'Well, if you *are* caught, you can only die once,' she said; 'but you won't be.'

The next night Madame Lavalette appeared in the Conciergerie accompanied by her little girl, who was then about thirteen, and the old nurse. The weather was very cold, and the Countess had put on over her dress a big loose cloak lined with fur, such as people then called a '*pelisse*,' and under it she carried a bag containing a black silk petticoat.

'You must put on these,' she said quickly; 'they will disguise you completely. How fortunate you are no taller than I am! I should have liked to give you a veil, but as I never wear one I am afraid. Here are your gloves, and hold my handkerchief to your face as if you were crying. Be sure you walk very slowly, and don't forget to stoop your head when you come to a doorway, for if you were to catch your feathers and your bonnet was to be pulled awry you would be discovered at once.'

'Of course the gaolers will be in the ante-room, and remember that the turnkey always hands me out, and to-day my sedan chair will be drawn up close to

the staircase. M. Baudus will be on the look-out for you, and will take you to your hiding-place.

‘That is all, I think—no, don’t touch me! If we break down we are ruined!’

Pausing for a moment, the poor woman fought fiercely with herself; then she turned to her daughter, whom she had sent out of ear-shot: ‘Josephine,’ she said, ‘I shall leave to-night at seven instead of eight. Keep behind me as we go out—the doors are so narrow; but when we get into the outer hall take care to be on my left, and then the turnkey won’t be able to hand me out, which you know I hate. After we get outside the grating and are going up the steps, come round to my right, or else the soldiers will be peering under my bonnet, as they are so fond of doing. Do you understand?’

‘Yes, I think so,’ answered the girl, and then they all sat down to dinner, and for an hour both husband and wife sat in silence, almost choking with every mouthful they tried to swallow.

At a quarter to seven Madame de Lavalette arose and rung for her faithful valet, who was waiting outside. She hastily whispered something to him, and added aloud:

‘Go and see if the chairmen are there. I am just coming.’

As soon as the valet had left the room she drew her husband behind a screen and began to dress him. It did not take long; then, calling her daughter, she said to her: ‘What do you think of your father?’

‘My father?’ gasped the child, staring.

‘Yes, will he do?’

‘I think so: he isn’t at all bad,’ answered Josephine, who was beginning to understand; but she looked very frightened as she spoke.

Her mother took no notice, as the heavy footsteps

of the gaoler were heard along the passage, and she hastily sprung behind the screen, which shut off one corner of the room. The door of the cell was unlocked, and Lavalette, holding his handkerchief to his eyes, and carefully bowing his head, walked out, followed by Josephine and the nurse, and entered the hall which was full of warders. Of course the little girl should have been on his left side, but in her terror she became confused and went round to her father's right. Full of sympathy—for Lavalette was a favourite in the prison—the turnkey laid his hand on the lady's arm and said :

‘ You are leaving early to-night, Madame.’ But the only answer was a deeper bowing of the shoulders and a slower walk.

At last the end of the hall was reached, and here day and night, sat a gaoler in a big armchair between two doors, one with a grating through which he could see everyone who came out of the prison, and the other which led through a small court to the street. The man stared hard at Lavalette ; not that he had any suspicion, but because a wife who had bidden her husband a last farewell was always interesting ; but he did not unhook his two keys till Lavalette impatiently shook the bars. Then he unlocked both doors, and the prisoner was outside. But well he knew he was not yet free. In front of the court was a guard-room containing twenty soldiers, all as anxious as the gaoler to see Madame Lavalette, and he had to go up twelve steps under their eyes before he could get into the sedan chair which was waiting for him. If he should stumble over his dress, as he so easily might, nothing could save him.

By this time Josephine had remembered her mother's directions, and was clinging to his right arm, so as to put as much space as possible between him and the soldiers. Together they mounted the steps where the sedan chair was waiting, and, as if overcome with grief, Lavalette flung himself into it, though he had noticed

to his horror that not a single chairman was in sight and that a sentry was posted not six feet away.

A lifetime seemed to have passed, though in reality it was not more than two or three minutes, before he heard his valet's voice whispering that one of the bearers had failed, and he had been obliged to search for another. Then the chair was caught up and carried across the court, Josephine and the nurse following behind. *Now* they were really out of the prison, and after turning one or two corners the chair was set down, and the door opened by Monsieur Baudus.

'Madame,' he said, 'may I remind you that you have an appointment with the President? You will travel quicker in the cabriolet which is waiting for you.'

Lavalette took his hand and stepped out of the chair and into the cabriolet, which stood a little further down the dark narrow street. The horses started off at a sharp trot, and Lavalette caught a glimpse of his daughter on the pavement with her hands clasped in an agony of fear for his safety, before she took his place in the empty chair. Very soon, as Baudus well knew would happen, the chair was overtaken by soldiers, who had orders to bring back the escaped prisoner, but finding only the child in it they allowed it to go on.

To Lavalette the drive appeared endless; on they went, down one street and up another, till he thought every moment he should see the dawn, though it really was not much past eight. At length, as they were crossing a lonely square, Lavalette cautiously peered out, and by the light of a flaming torch stuck upright near a doorway he perceived that the driver was his friend the Comte de Chassenon.

'Is it *you*?' he asked in amazement.

'Yes, it is I, and at your back are four good loaded pistols, which I hope you will use in case of need. Woe be to the person who tries to stop us.'

Then on they went as fast as ever, and on the way Lavalette slipped off his woman's clothes and put on a groom's livery, which he found under the seat, and a laced hat. At the Boulevard Neuf the coach stopped and Lavalette took out a white handkerchief, as he had been told to do. At this signal Baudus appeared from some dark corner and signed to him to follow. It was pitch dark and rain was pouring, so it was easy to escape detection, though more than once they heard police gallop by, and guessed, perhaps wrongly, that they were seeking for him. For an hour they walked, and in crossing a muddy road Lavalette lost one of his shoes, so that he was half dead with fatigue before Baudus paused in front of a large house.

'I am going in here,' he said, 'and while I am talking to the porter, you slip into the courtyard and go up a staircase you will find on the left. At the top is a dark passage, and at the end of it a pile of firewood. Stand behind it and wait; you will be quite hidden,' and as he spoke he turned and knocked at the door, which Lavalette, to his surprise and horror, recognised as that of his enemy the Duc de Richelieu, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

He was about to point out the danger when the gate opened, and Monsieur Baudus entered.

'Where is that man going?' cried the porter, as Lavalette disappeared into the courtyard.

'That? Oh! he is only my servant who is waiting for me,' and while Baudus began to question the porter as to some story he had invented about his master, Lavalette had reached the top of the stairs. Here his arm was taken, and he was pulled into a room and the door locked behind him.

Giddy and bewildered with all that had happened to him in the last three hours, the poor man was thankful to sit down on a sofa and rest in the darkness. For a time his mind seemed a blank; he could think of

nothing, but with rest and quiet and the sense of safety his reason gradually came back to him.

'Ah, now I know why they brought me here,' he said to himself. 'Of course it is the very last place they would dream of seeking for me,' and in the duke's house he stayed, carefully looked after by the wife of the cashier, Madame Bresson, who sometimes stole in to give him news of the outer world, and how Paris was rejoicing at his escape. She even invented stories about the kind way in which his wife had been treated, which were, alas ! very far from the truth.

Had he guessed how she was really suffering he would probably have left his hiding-place and have given himself up, for Madame de Lavalette was at that very moment undergoing terrible hardships. Her husband's escape had very soon been discovered, for though she had at once retreated behind the screen, and had made the noise of a person moving about, the gaoler had paid her two visits within five minutes of each other, and the second time had pushed aside the screen.

At the sight of the lady he gave a loud cry.

'You have ruined me, madame !' he said, and was rushing to give the alarm, when the Countess grasped his coat with such violence that he left part of it in her hands.

'The prisoner has escaped,' he shouted as he ran through the passages, hastening to give instant news to the prefect of police, who was responsible for his safety.

Not a moment was lost in search parties being organised and sent to every single place where he might be expected to be hiding. Even the city gates were closed, lest he should make for the country. All was, however, vain, and the rage of the baffled prefect was visited on the wife. She was removed to a cell which formed part of the quarters of the worst and wickedest

female prisoners ; letters were strictly forbidden her, so that she could not tell if her sacrifice had borne fruit or



MADAME LVALETTE TRIES TO HOLD BACK THE GAOLER

not, and her constant anxiety as to his fate, together with the perpetual change of sentries, almost entirely prevented her sleeping, so that little by little she fell

into a nervous state which finally ended in the loss of her reason.

Unconscious of what was happening, Lavalette entered with his whole heart into the plans of his friends for his escape from France. Everything proposed had some flaw, and was reluctantly rejected, and, strange to say, it was through the English, whom Lavalette had been taught to consider the enemies of his country, that freedom finally came.

A brigade of British troops was at that time stationed at Compiègne, not far from Paris, and Sir Robert Wilson, a friend of the general in command, gladly undertook to convey the fugitive out of France, with the help of Captain Hutchinson of the Guards. The plan was that Lavalette should be dressed in the uniform of a British officer, and should drive with Wilson in an English carriage beyond the barriers of Paris. At Compiègne Sir Robert's own carriage would pick them up, and together they would cross the frontier into Flanders. A passport was obtained for Lavalette, under the name of Colonel Losack, and as a young aide-de-camp of the general at Compiègne was returning there, Wilson begged him to find a hiding-place in the neighbourhood where a man might be concealed if necessary for a few hours.

As soon as it was dark Lavalette was taken to Captain Hutchinson's rooms, little knowing that the judge who had condemned him to death lived on the floor above. Here he was joined by Sir Robert Wilson, and by Bruce, one of the chief movers in the plot, who made some final arrangements, and then left him to get what sleep he could. It was not much, and at six he was thankful to jump up and dress himself; but a long hour had still to pass before Sir Robert arrived in full uniform and bade him take his place in Bruce's cabriolet, while

Hutchinson rode beside them in order to give his horse to Lavalette, in case of danger. To add to his peril, it was a lovely morning and the streets were full of people, many of them pressing towards the Place de Grève, where the guillotine was being set up.

At last they were at the barrier, and here they were obliged to stop and show their passports. Lavalette had of late years lived so much in Paris, being head of the Post Office, that his face was very well known, and Wilson advised him to sit well back in the carriage, while he himself leaned forward and answered the questions of the official. The soldiers took a good look at him, but were obliged to present arms to the British general, and with their heads thrown up and their muskets held in front they could not be quite certain that the man in the carriage was as much like Lavalette as they had at first thought. So they drove on, and after some terrible frights reached Compiègne safely. For some hours Lavalette lay hidden in the place provided by the young aide-de-camp, and at night Wilson's own carriage arrived from Paris. Relays of post-horses had been already engaged, so that they continued their journey much quicker than before. They were just beginning to breathe freely with the frontier in sight, when at Cambrai the English guard refused to awaken the porter who had the key of the gates, declaring they had had no orders, and it was three hours before the party could get through; while at Valenciennes the guard was not satisfied with the passports, and insisted on carrying them off for the commandant to examine in person. Luckily, the morning was cold and the commandant lazy; so he signed the passports in bed, instead of coming himself to inspect the travellers. No further objections were made, and in a little while the first farmhouse in Belgium lay straight before them.

Then Sir Robert bade his friend farewell and returned to Paris, which he had left only sixty hours before.

After resting a little while in the Netherlands, Lavalette went to Bavaria and lived for six years in a tiny out-of-the-way village with a poor artist for his companion. Would you like to know how they spent their days? They got up at six and worked till nine, when they breakfasted. Then followed more work till twelve, and again from two to five. At five Lavalette read for two hours, and at seven walked with his friend till supper time, after which they played chess till ten. But though at that hour Lavalette bade the artist good-night, he never went to bed till one o'clock. What was the use? He was too miserable to sleep, thinking of the sacrifice that had been made for him by his wife, whose state he now knew.

How great was his joy when after six years of exile he received a pardon and was able after a while to have his wife to live with him! Here, visited frequently by his daughter Josephine, who long since had been married, Lavalette passed the rest of his existence, and the news of his death in 1830 came as a surprise to a world which had ceased to remember the man in whose adventures it had once been so deeply interested.

THE FLIGHT OF THE KING

EVERYBODY who has read the story of the great Civil War in England will remember the fierce battle that was fought outside Worcester in 1651, two years after Charles I. had been executed at Whitehall. His son, young Charles, was present, and showed that he cared as little for his own life as any Stuart before or after him ; but Cromwell's troops were better trained, and their generals were more skilful, and in the end the Royalists were forced to fly and Charles II. with them.

THE FIRST STAGE

There was not much time for the king to consider where he should go, but he hastily called a few of his nobles together, and asked their counsel.

'From London I might get to The Hague,' said he, and Lord Wilmot supported him, but the rest cried out that it was madness, and he must take the north road. So urgent were they that Charles gave way, and choosing out a body of men whom he could trust, set out for Kidderminster, only to find before they had gone half the distance that their guide had lost his way, and that at any moment they might fall into the hands of the enemy, for Cromwell had a strong outpost stationed at Stourbridge. Then there stepped forward a private gentleman known as Mr. Charles Giffard.

'My house of Boscobel lies not far off,' said he, 'and

the woods around it are thick and wide. More than that, the woodmen who dwell in the forests are faithful, and it was but the other day that my Lord Derby found shelter there. Hiding-places and priests' holes there are in plenty, and I will undertake that his Majesty shall remain unsuspected for as long as he pleases. Once through Stourbridge he is safe. This is my counsel.'

'It is mine also,' added a voice, 'and mine,' 'and mine,' and so it was agreed upon.

Midnight had struck from the church towers before the little party crept softly past the lines of the enemy. Not a horse neighed, not a man stirred in his sleep, and when the fugitives stood on a bend of the road out of sight of the camp their spirits began to rise and they breathed more freely.

'A king's man lives in that cottage yonder,' whispered a stout fellow with long flowing hair; 'I know him well, and dare swear that he will give us what food he has in the house.'

'You speak wisely,' said Mr. Giffard, 'but we must not tarry long, for we must bring the king to my manor of Whiteladies ere the dawn breaks. Therefore hasten.'

Long seemed the minutes before the messenger returned, but at length he was back, bearing with him some cold meat and half a cheese.

'Your Majesty must eat as we go along,' said Mr. Giffard, and the king took out his clasp knife and cut a huge chunk off the cheese, vowing as he did so that it was the best cheese which English churn had ever produced, and that when he came to his own again he would not forget the churner.

In this way they pushed on till the faint light of dawn showed them some stacks of chimneys, which Mr. Giffard assured them belonged to Whiteladies.

'Thank God you are here,' cried their guide, kneeling to hold the king's stirrup as he dismounted and entered the doorway; then, lest some curious person should be

spying about, the horse was led in afterwards and stabled in the hall.

THE OAK TREE

But as Giffard very well knew, Charles could not remain for many hours at Whiteladies, which was much nearer the high-road than Boscobel, and was often visited by travellers who had missed their way, or were hungry and tired. So about noon Giffard wakened the king from the deep sleep in which he had fallen, and taking off his buff coat and the ribbon of the Order of the Garter that he wore across it, representing St. George killing the dragon, put on him a leathern jacket and coarse breeches belonging to one of the Penderels, a family of five brothers, tenants and loyal friends of all the Giffards. Then Charles bade farewell to the followers who had fled with him from Worcester, and leaving them 'with sad hearts but hearty prayers,' he was let out of Whiteladies by a back door, and accompanied only by Lord Wilmot and William and Richard Penderel, plunged into a wood known as the Spring Coppice. Here he parted from Wilmot, who was guided by John Penderel to the house of a Mr. Huntbach, where he was to lie hidden till it was safe for him to ride to a shelter that had been found elsewhere. While Penderel was cautiously making inquiries of the men whom he met he came across a Roman Catholic priest called Hodleston, chaplain to Mr. Whitgreave of Moseley Hall, near Wolverhampton, and informed him of the battle and of the plight of Lord Wilmot, who had fled with the king. In Whitgreave's name, Hodleston promised him an asylum, and it was settled that Wilmot should arrive at Moseley Hall at midnight.

King though he was, Charles was by no means so fortunate. Cold rain poured down on him even through the thick leaves of the trees, and he dared not stand up,

lest he should be seen by Cromwell's soldiers, whose shouts and clattering swords he could faintly hear. Thankful indeed was he when Richard Penderel appeared with a thick dark blanket on which he could lie, followed by his sister with some eggs, butter, and milk she had beaten up together. After he had taken this he felt more cheerful, and ready to look on the bright side, for though he was only twenty-one he had suffered hardships of all sorts, and now and always he was ready to make light of them.

At nightfall, Charles, wet and hungry, saw with relief Richard Penderel approaching. The brothers had left him alone all these hours, and had shown themselves to the neighbours from time to time, in order that no one might suspect that they had any hand in the king's escape, for they were well known to be Royalists. Now it was safe for Charles to quit the damp wood, so Richard went to fetch him, and brought him to his own house of Hobbal Grange, where he had supper, and put on some dry clothes belonging to his host. Then they set out for a walk of seven miles, hoping to find shelter with Mr. Wolfe, who lived at Madeley, near the Severn, with the design of putting Charles under the care of the loyal Welsh until he could escape to France. On the way they were more than once heartily frightened, and great was their dismay when Mr. Wolfe refused to take them in. 'You may be escaped Royalists, as you say you are,' was his answer, 'but while my son remains a prisoner at Shrewsbury I can do nothing which will draw down the wrath of Cromwell on his head. No man, Royalist though he be, shall shelter here, save only the king.'

'It is the king,' said Penderel, and Wolfe slowly sank on his knees and kissed his Majesty's hand.

'Pardon me, sire,' he whispered, glancing round him as he spoke, 'but all my hiding-places are known to the

rebels, and should they come along this road they would not pass them without a visit. But in my barn they will not look, and clean straw does not make bad lying, as every soldier knows.' And the king sank down joyfully on the heap of straw, while Wolfe piled more over him as a coverlet. It was his third refuge already, and forty-eight hours had not yet passed since the battle of Worcester was fought !

Early in the morning of September 5 young Wolfe, suddenly released from his prison, appeared at Madeley, bringing with him the news that the bridges and fords over the Severn had been seized and the boats watched. The plan of escape into Wales must clearly be abandoned, and by Penderel's advice Charles agreed to return at night to Boscobel, taking Trusty Dick, as Richard was afterwards called, as his guide. But Dame Wolfe refused to let him go till she had stained his face and hands with walnut juice, though one would have thought he could hardly be blacker than he was already.

The night was very dark, and it was needful even for Penderel to go slowly, and sometimes they had to wait and listen till an alarm, real or fancied, was over. Once they had to cross a stream, and now Charles, who was a good swimmer, gave his guide a lead. A little later they reached the cottage of John Penderel the woodman, who told them that Lord Wilmot was in hiding still at Moseley Hall, and that Major Carlis had managed to evade his pursuers after the battle, and, not daring to go to his own house in the neighbourhood, was lurking somewhere in Boscobel wood. 'He does wisely,' said Penderel, 'and it will be well if your Majesty follows his example.'

'Then bring him to me that at least we may conceal ourselves in company,' answered Charles, and when Carlis had been found and food had been given them, they climbed into a thick oak from which they could get peeps at Boscobel itself. The king was really not



CHARLES II IN THE OAK TREE

at all uncomfortable, for the bough was wide, and he lay most of the day with his head on a cushion which was placed on the major's lap. How the major enjoyed the situation we do not know, but the scouts who passed from time to time under the tree never guessed at their presence, and by evening all was clear again, and they were able to come down and enter Boscobel House without fear of capture. Charles spent the night in a 'priest's hole,' or cupboard, off the chimney, so small that a tall man such as he was forced to double himself up; but like many soldiers he could sleep anywhere, and the knowledge that the five Penderels were watching outside no doubt helped his slumbers.

'Whiteladies had been searched, but there was no further thought of Boscobel,' was the report they gave, so he passed a quiet day reading in the garden, ready at the first alarm to run into his hiding-place.

THE RIDE TO ABBOT'S LEIGH

That afternoon brought news indeed. As the king knew, Mistress Jane Lane, the young sister of the loyal Colonel Lane of Bentley Hall, not far from Boscobel, was intending to set out on the long ride to Bristol, in order to visit her friend Mrs. Norton at the little village of Abbot's Leigh, on the other side of the Avon. Most girls would have hesitated at undertaking such an expedition through the very seat of war, and most elder brothers would have put a stop to it; but Mistress Jane was both brave and headstrong, and declared she was well able to look after herself. She had a passport, and was allowed a man to protect her, and that was all she wanted.

Now it had been arranged that this attendant should be Lord Wilmot in disguise; but suddenly John Penderel came forward with the proposal that the king, and not Wilmot, should accompany the lady, and once at Bristol,

a ship could easily be found which would convey him to France or Spain. But as there were signs that, in spite of all care, suspicions were falling on Boscobel, Charles was to go to Moseley without delay, and meet Wilmot. A horse was brought from Humphrey Penderel's mill, and with the five brothers and their brother-in-law to guard him, the little party set out, each man being armed with a bill, which was a long pole with a knife at the end, a pike and a pistol.

The ground was uneven and the night dark, and even the sharp eyes of the horse could scarcely see where to plant his feet.

'Odd's fish, friend Penderel, thy steed goes but roughly,' said the king, when a stumble had more than once nearly jolted him out of the saddle.

'Can your Majesty blame him?' answered the miller, who had the quickness of tongue that ever pleased Charles; 'can your Majesty blame him when he has the weight of three kingdoms on his back?' And Charles laughed and made no more complaints of the paces of his horse, with which, indeed, he had to part before they had gone much further. A wet walk of three miles brought him to Moseley Hall, where he lay for two days, most of which he spent in a little room over the porch commanding the road from Wolverhampton, now crowded with fugitives from Worcester. Once a party of Cromwell's soldiers actually visited the house, but were soon convinced by the owner's calm manner of receiving them that they were on the wrong track and went quietly away.

That night the king set out for Bentley Hall, as Mistress Jane Lane was to start on her journey early next morning. However, before he left he wrote various letters to friends in London, commending to their care the 'honourable gentleman Mr. Whitgreave of Moseley and his lady mother,' who had risked their lives in his cause. But he never knew that Wilmot,

who remained behind, had forced his host to promise that should the king have been traced to the Hall, he should be allowed to personate him, and go to prison or the scaffold in his stead.

On September 10, about six o'clock, a black-haired man in a suit of rough grey cloth, and holding his hat in his hand, rode up to the front door of Bentley Hall, where Mistress Jane in a riding-coat and broad-feathered hat was awaiting him. The colonel had spent fully an hour in the stables, teaching Charles the duties of a lady's servant, but, in spite of his instructions, the king held out the wrong hand to the young lady when helping her to mount the pillion or double saddle, where she had to sit behind him, holding fast by his leather belt. The king, or 'William Jackson' as he was now called, was delighted at the thought of the many adventures that would fall to their share, and was quite convinced that he and his companions—for Mr. Lascelles, Colonel Lane's cousin, was one of the party—would come safely through them. And truly they began soon enough. For scarcely two hours after they had quitted Bentley Hall the horse cast a shoe, and they had to stop at the nearest forge in order to get a new one. Here the king enjoyed himself mightily in a gossip with the blacksmith over the search for 'that rogue Charles Stuart,' and departed declaring loudly that 'the villain richly deserved hanging.' Near Stratford they rode quietly through a troop of cavalry which had called a halt, and when they stopped for the night in the village of Long Marston, Charles went down to the kitchen to eat his supper. To his surprise, the cook made him wind up the jack that hung before the fire, a thing which he had never seen before, and scolded him soundly for his awkwardness. But the king was never at a loss for an answer, and only shook his head stupidly.

'My father is a poor tenant of Colonel Lane in

Staffordshire,' he said, 'and seldom enough do we taste meat. When we do, the joint is so small that little need have we for a jack.' And hearing this the cook, who was kindhearted, cut him an extra slice.

Two days' hard riding brought them to Bristol, where they crossed the Avon by a bridge in the town



Near Stratford they passed through a troop of Cavalry

and passed through some green meadows to the foot of the wooded cliffs through which the river runs.

Trusting implicitly the loyalty of Mr. and Mrs. Norton of Abbot's Leigh, it had been agreed on by Colonel Lane and his sister that so dangerous a secret had better be told to nobody, so Mistress Jane merely begged her friends to allow Pope, the butler, to see after

the comfort of her servant, who was just recovering from a severe illness. Charles was therefore given a room to himself, but next morning, when he sat down to breakfast with the rest, and the talk turned on the battle of Worcester, fought just ten days ago, he began to get rather uncomfortable. 'Why, I was in his Majesty's own regiment,' said a man newly come to help in the stable, 'and I saw the king as plainly as I see you. A dark gentleman, not so unlike Will Jackson there, but a good three fingers taller.' All turned and stared at Will Jackson, who gave a sheepish grin and had the presence of mind to keep his seat. At the first opportunity, however, he rose and quitted the room, though not before Pope, the butler, who some years previously had served in his household, felt sure that he recognised him. As soon as he could get away, Pope contrived to see Mistress Lane, and informed her that he was certain that Will Jackson was the king himself, and swore that he would die for him. Then, by the advice of Mr. Lascelles and Mistress Jane, Charles sent for Pope and entrusted him with the secret, and while he stayed in the neighbourhood the king had no wiser counsellor than he.

THE WANDERINGS OF THE KING

But no vessel was to be found at Bristol which would take Charles where he wished to go, so another month was spent in wandering in disguise from one loyalist house to another, till at length all seemed clearly arranged for him to take ship for France at a little place not far from Lyme Regis. Rooms were taken at the inn for a runaway couple from Devonshire and their attendants, and thither on the night of September 22 came Charles, riding pillion with Juliana Coningsby, and escorted by his host, Colonel Wyndham.

Hour after hour slipped by, and the signal for the

party to go down to the shore was never heard. In vain Wyndham and his servant watched on the beach for the first sign of the boat, and little knew that the captain's wife, guessing something of the truth, had locked her husband up in his room, fearing lest he should bring trouble on the family. When the prisoner was let out the moment for escape was past.

For several days the king moved up and down the country, running terrible risks from people who declared that they were sure they knew his face. His father or his brother would have betrayed themselves a hundred times over, but Charles's wits were quick, and he always had an answer ready, and more than once cooked his own food in his hiding-place, so as to prevent the servants finding out his presence in the house.

At length it became clear to all that it was not the West country which would provide a boat to carry the king across the water, but that he must try some of the little bays on the Sussex coast, so much favoured by smugglers. It was on October 6 that he left Trent and Colonel Wyndham for the second time, and started eastwards for Salisbury with Colonel Phelips of Montacute. Here again he was at once recognised by his hostess, Mrs. Hyde, and advised by her to pretend to depart early in the morning, only coming back at night 'to a very safe place.' This seemed to the king good counsel, and at dawn he and Colonel Phelips rode off to Stonehenge, where Charles counted the great stones twice over, and made the same number each time, which has been held to be impossible. After sunset he returned to the hiding-hole, as Mrs. Hyde bade him, 'and stayed there all alone, very convenient and safe, for four or five days,' when with two or three faithful friends he took the road to Shoreham, where a ship had been hired to take him to France.

As usual, adventures by the way were not lacking, and Charles played his part with his usual zest, even

reproving his host for rapping out an oath when the squire, looking at his short hair and plain, common clothes, asked suspiciously if he were not 'some round-headed rogue's son,' but was assured by one of the gentlemen present that he would stand surety for honest Will Jackson.

Deliverance seemed very near now, and a long day's ride brought them to Brighthelmstone (or Brighton) on October 15. Here they met Mansel, the merchant who had hired the barque, destined, he had been told, for 'a person of quality.' With Mansel was Tattersal, the captain of the ship, who, says the king, 'looked very much upon me,' and after supper informed the merchant that 'he had not been clear with him, for he was the king, and he very well knew him to be so.' This statement much surprised Mansel, who declared the captain to be wrong, but the captain shook his head, and repeated his words, adding, 'he took my ship together with other fishing vessels at Brighthelmstone in 1648. But be not troubled at it, for by the grace of God I will venture my life and all for him, and set him safely on shore, if I can, in France.'

Leaving the captain, the merchant brought this wonderful tale to the king, who confessed that it was true. But though Charles trusted Tattersal, he did not trust his wife, who lived in the town, and, remembering what had happened at Charmouth, he kept the captain with him in the inn, drinking beer and smoking tobacco.

At four next morning, but not before he had been recognised by the master of the inn who fortunately 'proved very honest,' the king and Lord Wilmot climbed up a ladder into the vessel's side and went straight to the cabin. Here Tattersal entered, and at once fell on his knees and repeated the oath he had sworn to Mansel, but, though relieved from fear of betrayal by him, Charles must have spent some anxious hours, till at seven o'clock the tide was high enough to

enable the little ship of sixty tons burden, with a crew of four men and a boy, to spread her sails. For prudence sake, the captain steered at first in a contrary direction, but at five o'clock he made straight for the French coast. A last and quite unfounded alarm drove the king and Wilmot to land in a cockboat at Fécamp in Normandy, whence they proceeded to Rouen, in order to provide themselves with clothes. Then in a hired coach Charles took the road to Paris, and outside the gates he met his mother, after a parting of seven years.

THE REAL ROBINSON CRUSOE

I DARESAY some of you have learned a poem beginning

I am monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute,
From the centre all round to the sea
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.

When I was a little girl every child could say it, and we were all told that it was written about the real Robinson Crusoe, whose story you are going to read.

In the reign of Charles II. a family called Selcraig, or Selkirk, lived in the fishing village of Largo, on the coast of Fife. John Selkirk was a shoemaker, who did a good trade and brought up his children very strictly ; so strictly, indeed, that their mother was sorry for them, and gave them many little treats to take the taste of punishment out of their mouths ! Her favourite amongst them was Alexander, the youngest, and as in those days it was always thought that the seventh son was bound to turn out a wonderful man, she took particular care that he learned all the schoolmaster could teach him. This was, to be sure, nothing more than reading, writing and arithmetic, while from the sailors in the little harbour he picked up the art of sailing a ship, and told his mother that as soon as he could get a captain to engage him he meant to go to sea.

His mother, who had never in his life said no to him, was quite willing, though she felt it would break her heart to part with him, especially as her other six sons

had left home and were working elsewhere. Old Selkirk, however, grew very angry at the bare notion of such a thing.

‘Alexander,’ he declared, ‘should stay at home and be a shoemaker like himself’; and stay at home he had to, and sit hammering away at the soles of boots while his mind was out upon the sea.

Thus matters went on till the year 1695, when the boy was nineteen, and then an event happened which, though very trifling in itself, changed his whole life. In those days the Scotch services were very long, and the sermons full of things which no one could really understand, least of all village boys and girls. Sunday, or ‘the Sabbath,’ was a day of terrible gloom; to speak of anything except religion was considered a sin; to laugh was almost a crime, and time was hardly allowed for a little food after the morning service before they were all back in church for the afternoon preaching.

It was on one of these long dreary Sundays that Alexander was sitting with his father under the pulpit, wondering how much time had already gone by, and if he could get away from his work the following evening early enough to go out with the boats. He was so still, that his father, who had often been vexed at his fidgets, began to think that his son really was growing serious at last, when suddenly the good man nearly jumped from his seat at the sound of a laugh beside him. Every head in the church turned and looked at Alexander; even the minister paused in his sermon, never guessing that it was something he had said which had amused the boy. Alexander tried hard to check himself, but the more shocked grew the congregation the more loudly he laughed, till his father, speechless with indignation, dragged him, still laughing, out of church.

What occurred when they got home I cannot tell you, but the next morning a notice was put upon the

door summoning 'Alexander Selkirk, son of John Selkirk, elder, to answer for indecent conduct in church.'

This was more than the young man could bear, and by midnight he was on board a fast ship out in the open sea. All the same, the assembly was held, and as Alexander did not answer to his name it was entered in the parish records that his punishment would be held over till his return.

When this return took place six years had passed by. Alexander was now twenty-five, and had, it was whispered, taken service with the pirates who were at that time the terror of the southern seas. Whether this was true or not, the elders of the church thought it prudent to let bygones be bygones, and not to bring up the subject of Alexander's 'indecent conduct.' They 'made no doubt that he had mended his ways,' as one grave old man observed to another, 'and no more should be said about it,' when conduct still more 'indecent' forced them out of their calm, and the whole of the Selkirk family then in Largo had to appear before the minister and the elders of the parish in November 1701.

'Disagreement together' was the cause of the notice, and it seemed that the young pirate found life at the shoemaker's dull, and was always ready to pick a quarrel with anyone who gave him a chance. This time his idiot brother, Andrew, had contrived to make him take a large drink out of a can of salt water, whereupon Alexander, angered by his laughter, set to and beat him; the rest, hearing Andrew's cries rushed to his rescue, and there was a general fight.

After a careful inquiry, sentence was pronounced, and it was the most awful that the kirk session (for so the assembly was called) could inflict. Accordingly, strange as it appears in a man of his sort, on the following Sunday Alexander, mounted on a high stool, facing the whole

congregation, was rebuked publicly 'for his scandalous carriage,' and bidden to leave the church. We may be sure that the building was crowded that day, for it was a sight no man would willingly lose. *Why* he did not run away this time as he had done the last we do not know, unless he thought it would not be easy to find a ship so late in the year. In any case he stayed at home till the spring, when he travelled to London, and soon after took service with the celebrated pirate Dampier, who was starting for South American waters.

At that period these pirates, or buccaneers, as they preferred being called, constituted a greater danger to peaceful vessels carrying merchandise from one country to another than either tempests or sunken rocks. The ships were the property of private people, and put to sea from English or French ports, with the knowledge and even protection of their governments, in order to seize the Spanish galleons coming back from America laden with gold. The wild life full of adventure proved very fascinating to most young men, but if the expected harvest turned out barren, the crews of the privateers did not scruple to fill their pockets by plundering the Spanish settlements on shore.

Among all the buccaneering captains none was better known than Dampier, when in 1702 he enlisted Alexander Selkirk among his crew. His two swift little ships, the *St. George*, commanded by himself, and the *Fame* by Pulling, were fitted out by some merchants and carried twenty-six guns each. On this occasion it was not only the Spaniards whom Dampier was at liberty to attack, but as we were then at war with France, Queen Anne's husband Prince George, the Lord High Admiral of England, gave them permission to capture the French vessels also.

The *St. George* and the *Fame* were already lying off the Downs when a quarrel broke out between Dampier and

Pulling, who sailed off in a rage and was never heard of after. So Dampier was forced to wait for another vessel, and it was not till September 1703 that the *St. George* and the *Cinque Ports* found themselves in the Atlantic. They headed straight for Brazil, where they stopped for repairs and to take fresh provisions on board, and here violent quarrels broke out between Dampier and his men, which so disgusted Selkirk that he determined to leave the ship at the earliest opportunity. However nothing could be done at that moment, and the two vessels proceeded on their way, till a tremendous storm off Cape Horn drove them asunder, not to meet again till they cast anchor, in February 1704, in the harbour of Juan Fernandez.

This, the *real* Robinson Crusoe's island, lies out in the Pacific Ocean, 400 miles due west from the coast of Chili. It is twelve miles long by six broad, and a ridge of lofty mountains crosses it. Under the high rocks are deep bays full of curious fish, while on the sandy beaches seals may be seen in hundreds stretched out in the sun. Slender cabbage palms often a hundred feet high, with their crown of leaves springing right at the top, were found in plenty. The fruit or 'cabbage' was cut out from these top branches, and very good the pirates thought it. And should they be thirsty after a long walk, countless streams tumbled down the sides of the mountains and through the woods.

Such was the pleasant place where the Scotch shoemaker's son was destined to spend more than four years alone. But it was not till eight months later that Selkirk took up his abode on the island. The interval was spent in chasing ships up and down both coasts of South America, sometimes catching a great prize, sometimes finding that it had just escaped them. During these voyages Selkirk left the *St. George* and joined the *Cinque Ports*, which in May parted company for ever with its companion, and four months after put into Juan

Fernandez in order to provision itself and to pick up two men who had been left behind during its former visit,



when it had sailed off hurriedly in chase of a French cruiser.

The ship brought away two men, but it left one ; for Selkirk, wearied to death of the life he had been leading,

and the perpetual quarrels among the crew, suddenly envied the two castaways who came on board looking healthy and happy, without giving himself time to remember that to be entirely alone from morning till night, never speaking—for there was no one to hear you—never asking a question—for who was there to reply?—was a very different thing from having a companion to talk and laugh with you. Selkirk did not think of this; he was always used to live in a crowd, and did not know what a dreadful thing solitude could become.

So he went gaily to the captain, and asked permission to be put on shore. Stradling made no objection, and a boat was got ready and filled with his possessions. Among them were his clothes and bedding, some instruments necessary to seamanship, a gun, some bullets and a little powder, a knife, a kettle, a hatchet, a Bible, and a few other books, together with some flint and steel to kindle a fire. When they touched the beach the things were put out, they then bade him good-bye, and the boat was pushed off. It was only when they were well away that he understood what he was doing. Rushing out into the sea, he implored them to take him with them, but the captain laughed, and shouted that he had made his bed and now must lie on it.

Not for some days could Selkirk really believe that the *Cinque Ports* intended to abandon him. It was only a joke, he told himself, and when they had frightened him well they would be sure to come back. Therefore it was needful that he should always be on the look out, and stay on the shore, where they could easily see a signal. He even tried to keep awake, lest he might miss the lights that were hung from the prow. All in vain; not a sail could be seen by day, not a speck by night. He ate such food as he could get on the beach till he grew to hate it and would eat nothing. Next the power to sleep forsook him; he seemed to hear

ghosts in the rustle of the leaves, and the calls of the seals became to his excited brain the cries of savage beasts. At this time he was very near becoming a madman.

But at length this stage passed. He grew used to his position, and after a while even began to like it. He left off sticking to the shore, and took long walks among the mountains, where he found plenty of fruit besides turnips and parsnips, and radishes and cresses. His first care had been to cut down some trees with his axe, and build himself a log hut a little way behind the beach ; and he afterwards added a second higher up near the woods, where he slept. The bedding he had brought from the ship he stretched upon a wooden frame, and as he was clever with his hands he soon had a table and chair. When the second hut was built he used it as a sitting-room and kitchen, and the hard wood of the pimento or pepper tree served him both for coal and candle. Like the Indians, he obtained his fire by rubbing two pieces of stick together till they grew hot and burst into flame. In this hut he passed most of his days, as from it he could perceive any sail that went by, and would be able to light a fire as a signal. But though now and then he caught sight of something that looked like a ship on the far horizon, for many many months none ever came near.

Although Selkirk was quite alone during his stay on the island, he was not the first person who had visited it. It was not at all an uncommon thing in those days for a vessel suddenly to quit its anchorage and give chase to a Spanish ship, leaving part of its crew on some island where they were enjoying a holiday. This, as we know, had happened to two men of the *Cinque Ports*, and it must have occurred to others before them, for after the first year, when he had grown to be happy in his solitude, and was not always pining to be taken

away from it, he paid visits to the other side of the island, and found there a small colony of cats, evidently left behind by some sailor. Selkirk had been fond of the Largo cats, and never passed them without a greeting, so he was delighted to carry over some to his own hut. In the long evenings he taught them all



sorts of tricks, and he said afterwards that he had trained them to dance, and had even brought up some kids to be their partners! Perhaps the dance may have been unknown to the ball-rooms of Europe, but anyhow it must have been very pretty to see.

As time wore on, Selkirk cared less and less about leaving the island, and even the appearance of ships some distance out to sea did not cause him the wild

excitement he expected. Once, indeed, he got a great fright, for while taking a walk among the mountains he chanced to see, in a little harbour below, two Spanish vessels. How he trembled lest they should cross over and discover his huts, for he knew that should he be captured, his captivity would probably only end with his life. He hid himself for a whole day in a thicket while he had reason to think that the crews might be roaming the island in search of provisions, and only ventured out when from the silence he imagined they had returned to the ship. But on turning a corner, he fell over them, sound asleep. They at once started up and gave chase, but luckily Selkirk knew the ground better than they did, and plunging through the undergrowth swung himself up among the thick branches of a tree.

The next day the ship left the harbour, but not very long after he ran a greater risk still when hunting a goat in the lower hills, where the cabbage palms mostly grew. In this part the rocks were full of holes dug by puffins as roosting places, and consequently were very rotten. The goat Selkirk was pursuing had sought refuge on a spit jutting out from the main mass, and the hunter jumped lightly after it. In a moment the rock had broken off, and he and the goat fell together to the bottom of the valley. When, after twenty-four hours, the man recovered consciousness, the goat was lying dead beside him, and he himself managed with great difficulty to crawl to his hut a mile away. No bones were broken, but he was dreadfully sore and bruised, and it was three days before he could leave his bed again.

Now during all the years Selkirk was on the island he had been careful to observe two very important rules. One was to note carefully the days of the week, so that he would be able to tell how long he had been alone, and the other to talk aloud for several hours of the day, so that he might not forget how to speak, if ever he was rescued. For this purpose his kids and

kittens were a great help, and he used to tell them stories of what had happened when he was a boy and about the cats he knew in Largo.

One dread haunted the exile even in his happiest hours. He did not want to die and pass out of remembrance with no man knowing what had become of him. So he carved his name and the date of his landing on several trees, and when the blade got worn down with the hardness of the wood he made himself new knives out of some iron hoops that were washed upon the shore. He always ran down to the beach the morning after a gale to see what treasures might be awaiting him, and many a useful thing was added to his store.

Four years and four months had passed since Selkirk had been left in solitude, when deliverance came to him. Two ships called the *Duke* and the *Duchess*—perhaps after the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, then all-powerful with Queen Anne—were fitted out by some Bristol merchants on a privateering cruise. With the *Duke*, commanded by Captain Rogers, sailed Dampier as pilot, for though everyone acknowledged he was a good seaman, his temper had made him so unpopular that no shipowner would give him command.

The two vessels had been at sea for six or seven months, when Rogers decided to put in to Juan Fernandez, in order to take in water. A boat was put off from a long distance, but before it reached the shore a light was seen on the land. Not knowing what to make of this, orders were given to return at once, so as to hear what Captain Rogers thought about it. His opinion was that the light might have been shown by French ships at anchor, and that it would be necessary either to be prepared for battle or to sail away in the darkness without the water they had come for.

‘Do nothing till morning,’ was Dampier’s advice, ‘and then sail round the south point of the island, keeping a sharp lookout all the time.’

Very cautiously the ships proceeded to follow the counsel of Dampier, but could find no ships in any of the bays.

'They must have seen us and made off,' said the captain. 'Let a boat go ashore with all the men armed.'

The boat went, but did not return, so a pinnace



"SELKIRK! IT IS SELKIRK!!"

was sent after it to see what had happened. Very soon it came back, bearing in it a quantity of crawfish and a man dressed in goatskins.

The sailors crowded round him, staring with amazement, when suddenly Dampier's voice broke the silence.

'Selkirk! It is Selkirk!' cried he.

‘Yes, Selkirk,’ answered the other in strange deep tones, for in spite of all his talks to the cats and kids, he did not speak as he had been used to do, and it was not easy to understand him.

‘Tell us how long you have been there, and what you did,’ asked the captain, and slowly, as if finding his words with difficulty, Selkirk told.

‘For four years and four months,’ said he, ‘I have kept count. At first I was like one mad; then I found it a pleasant life, and did not wish to leave it, till I saw that the ships anchored near were English ships. When I knew that I lit a fire, and watched all night. In the morning I was afraid, for the ships sailed round the island, and I climbed a hill and watched again. When I saw the boat put off, I ran to my hut and tied on a stick a bit of white rag I had kept for this, and they came, and I was waiting for them. But I heard the name of Dampier, and I would not go with them till they said Dampier was not captain but pilot, as I did not like Dampier. That is all now.’ And they let him alone, for they perceived that even those few words had tired him. But Dampier had learned some wisdom from years of hardships, and was besides glad to see his old comrade, so he persuaded the captain to make Selkirk mate of the *Duke*.

It was some time before Selkirk could adopt the habits of the rest of the crew. Grog he would never touch; it tasted nasty after the hill streams, and his feet had grown unaccustomed to the use of shoes, which hurt him. However, he picked up his old ways by degrees, and had not been on board a month before he was given the command of a prize which was captured. Neither Rogers nor Selkirk was a cruel man, and both did their best for the prisoners; indeed, prayers from the Church of England service were read daily on the quarter deck, and always before a fight. The crews were well looked after and kept in order, and altogether

the ships were ruled more like a man-of-war in these days than a privateer two hundred years ago.

A cruise through the islands of the Pacific as far as China and a voyage to India took up more than two years, and during that time the *Duke* and *Duchess* had captured so many rich prizes that Selkirk's share when he returned to England in October 1711 amounted to 800*l*. How strange it must have felt to sail up the Thames once more and to find himself in London again ; and further to learn that the story of his lonely life on the island had travelled faster than he, and that many great people were anxious to see him and hear him tell the tale himself. One of these, the writer Sir Richard Steele, has told us what he thought of him, and declares that if he had heard nothing of his history he would have known he had been much alone, from Selkirk's way of never heeding the common things about him, of which other men thought so much. To Steele, Selkirk confessed that he often wished himself back on his island again. 'I am now worth eight hundred pounds,' he said, 'but shall never be so happy as when I was not worth a farthing.'

Selkirk appears to have remained in London seven or eight months before he set out for his old home. It was on a fine Sunday in the spring of 1712 that at last he knocked at the door of his father's house in Largo, but as every one was out—as he might have known they would be—he walked on to the church. The noise made by the opening door caused the congregation to turn their heads, and great was their surprise to behold a strange man enter, dressed in clothes covered with gold lace. The stranger hastily dropped into a seat near the door, from which he could see his family pew, now occupied by his father and mother and some of his brothers. At his entrance his mother had glanced up carelessly over her Bible like

the rest, and having looked once, continued to look in a puzzled sort of a way. At length a great light spread over her face and she started up.

'It's Sandy!' she cried. 'Sandy!' And staggered down the aisle to meet him. The minister stopped his sermon, and the people all rose to their feet. No one remembered the scapegrace and his 'indecent conduct' in church in their desire to welcome the exile who for so many years had been mourned as dead.

But there was some disappointment both to him and his family in his homecoming, as there generally is. Alexander was delighted to be back with his parents and to make friends with his many new nephews and nieces, but he had lived by himself too long to be able to pass his whole time in the company of others, and this nobody in Largo could understand. Very soon he would go out when the sun rose, taking with him some oatcake and cheese and never return till night had fallen. If he was asked where he had been all day, he would answer 'In Keil's Den,' a beautiful valley where no one ever came. Then directly after supper he would go up to his room, followed by the two house cats, and there he would teach them to dance and to do tricks, as he had done to his island friends.

'If children were as good as cats,' he would often say, 'parents would be happier.'

There was no denying that, in spite of the cats, life on shore did not suit Alexander, and he often grieved his mother by breaking out into loud laments for his island. She grew a little happier when he bought a boat, and spent all day in sailing it on the Firth of Forth, for she hoped he might grow more content, but when summer passed away and the bad weather returned he became as silent and moody as ever.

By this time Selkirk had decided that a wife was the
A.S.

only cure for the ills he suffered from, and that he could not do better than choose a girl whom he often met driving home her mother's cow on his way from Keil's Den. But not even for Sophia Bruce would he endure all the questions and chatter which the talk of his marriage would raise among his friends in Largo. So he persuaded Sophia to meet him one day and let him carry her in the boat to the opposite shore. There they took the coach for London, where they were married, and for years his family did not know where he was nor what he was doing. Only two more records remain of his life : one a will made by him in favour of Sophia in 1717 before going to sea again, and from the mention in it of 'lands, gardens, orchards, &c., in Largo or elsewhere,' he must have been a well-to-do man ; and the other a claim seven years later by one Frances Candis, who declared herself his widow. From the papers she brought, it was found that Alexander Selkirk, described as a 'Lieutenant,' had died on board his Majesty's ship *Weymouth* in 1723, so he had left the privateering life for the Royal Navy. But what drove him back to the sea, or who offered him a commission, is not told, nor can we find an answer to the mystery we should best like to have solved—namely, whether Defoe, whose book was published in 1719, had ever talked face to face with the real Robinson Crusoe.

HOW THE RUSSIAN SOLDIER WAS SAVED

It was on the morning of December 3, 1805, the day after the Battle of Austerlitz when the French had utterly routed both Austrians and Russians, that Napoleon was crouching over a camp fire on the borders of Lake Satschan, in Austria, talking about the fight with some of his officers. The cold had been bitter for a long while past, and the ice on the lake was so thick that during the battle a corps of five or six thousand Russians, defeated after a fierce struggle, did not hesitate to retreat across it. They were nearly halfway over and almost felt themselves safe, when orders were given to fire on the ice itself. Crack ! crack ! came the noise from a hundred points at once, and slowly the great mass split and parted, swallowing up the wretched men in the black water. A few managed to escape to the banks, and there the French soldiers aided them to land, but the bulk, exhausted as they were, and half frozen, sank to the bottom. Then night fell, and the living men on the shore lay wrapped in a sleep nearly as deep as that of the dead.

The Emperor stood stretching out his hands to the blaze, and exulting over the total defeat of the Austrian army. Only on one subject he was silent, and that was the capture of the French eagles in charge of his brother Joseph by the Grand Duke Constantine, brother of the Emperor Alexander. And even though the flags had been retaken and given back to him, it hurt his pride

to think that they had been lost by the carelessness of one of his own family. Still, his mind had a thousand pleasant thoughts to dwell on, and plans for his next move had to be formed, when in the midst of giving an order he suddenly stopped.

'Look there!' he said, and his generals, following the direction of his finger, saw the sun flash on the face of a Russian soldier, lying wounded on a floating lump of ice about a hundred yards from the bank. The man had received a ball in his thigh, and the little iceberg was red with his blood, but at the sight of the group of officers with the Emperor in their midst, he raised himself with an effort, and crying out that after the battle all soldiers should cease to be enemies and become brothers, implored Napoleon to grant him his life.

'What does he say?' asked the Emperor, and when the interpreter had translated the man's appeal, Napoleon gave orders to General Bertrand, his aide-de-camp, to do his best to save the wounded Russian.

Now there happened to be lying in the water, close to the bank, the trunks of two large trees which it seemed might be used as rafts. Astride of these several of the French officers seated themselves, and tried to make the logs proceed in the direction of the iceberg by the movement of their knees. At first they were delighted as well as surprised by their success. The strange horses they rode were actually advancing, and the dull eyes of the Russian soldier grew eager with hope. Then suddenly, they did not know why, one of the trunks gave a lurch to one side, and in an instant the men were in the water, clutching wildly as they fell at the fragments of floating ice which surrounded the log that their companions bestrode. In the commotion of the waters, the tree trunk gave a plunge and turned over, upsetting the men that were on it. Weighed down by their dripping clothes, and caught

as if in a trap by the blocks of broken ice, not a soul would have escaped drowning had it not been for the



THE WOUNDED RUSSIAN CALLS TO NAPOLEON FROM THE ICE

ropes flung to them by their comrades, who hauled them with great difficulty into safety.

‘How foolish of them not to strip themselves first,’

cried a young cavalry officer, Marbot by name, who had watched it all from the bank. 'As if it were possible to rescue a man from drowning, hampered by heavy coats and furs.' He had really spoken to himself, but General Bertrand overheard him, and repeated his words to the Emperor, who was standing near by.

'Marbot is right,' answered Napoleon, 'they have risked their lives for nothing ; courage without common sense is of little use.' In his turn the Emperor's reply reached Marbot, who felt that after pointing out the way to others, he could hardly avoid taking it himself. So very unwillingly—for swimming in freezing water was a very different thing from rushing into battle when your blood was up, he dismounted from his horse, stripped off his clothes, and plunged into the lake. Oh ! how cold it was ! For a moment all the breath felt knocked out of his body, then, being young, strong, and a practised swimmer, and knowing that the Emperor's eye was upon him, he pulled himself together, and struck out in the direction of the wounded soldier, followed by a lieutenant of artillery, called Roumestain.

The task was even more difficult than Marbot had imagined, for owing to the breaking up of the strong ice on the previous evening there was hardly any left that would bear the weight of a man, while the new coating formed by the frost broke easily and was full of sharp edges that pricked his body like so many needles. Roumestain suffered less, for he had only to swim along the path made by Marbot, and at length he noticed this, and declared it was his turn to go in front. Slowly, inch by inch, they fought their way, the poor man on the iceberg looking on. How, weak from loss of blood and the pain of his wound, he had survived the bitter cold of the night before, and the chill of the ice on which he lay, was of itself a miracle, and he had grown sick at heart at the failure to deliver him from the prison where he lay fast bound like the giant Prometheus.

Could they ever break through that fast-forming crust, and move their limbs in the deadly grip of that water? But yes, it was no dream, they were nearer than before, always nearer, and at last they had reached the iceberg and could touch him with their hands.

For a moment he closed his eyes, faint with the rush of joy that swept over him.

To Marbot and Roumestain it appeared as if the man was already saved, but in reality the worst was yet to come. Their plan was to plunge into the lake behind the iceblock, pushing it before them as they went; but they soon found that the new ice through which it broke gathered itself up in front into a dense mass, which not only barred their progress, but was strong enough to break off pieces of the big block of ice, so that every moment they feared that it would cease to bear the weight of the soldier, and that he would be swallowed up in the waters. With eyes anxiously fixed on the shore and silently measuring the distance, they fought on, cut and scratched by the sharp ice which surrounded them, till suddenly they felt the ground firm under their feet. Then with a gasp of relief they took the rapidly diminishing block of ice on their shoulders, catching with their free hands the ropes that were flung to them, which they fastened round the Russian, who was thus drawn to shore. At length, torn and bleeding, they were pulled out of the water by their comrades, and sank exhausted on the ground.

Words cannot say how delicious the rough blanket felt which Marbot's friend Massy had warmed at the camp fire and now wrapped round him. Hot water was ready to bathe the wounds of both heroes, and, better than all, the Emperor came and praised their courage, and ordered his black servant Roustan to serve them out some rum. As to the Russian soldier, Napoleon desired that some gold should be given him, and after rolling

him up in furs and giving him food he was taken to a house in the neighbourhood, where the bullet was extracted from his thigh by Larrey, the doctor. The next day he was well enough to be removed to the hospital in the town of Brünn, and nursed till he was strong again. Full of gratitude to those who had saved him he refused to serve any more against the Emperor, and as he was a Lithuanian by birth, though a Russian subject not a Russian born, he was able to enter Napoleon's legion without loss of honour.

From Marbot's Memoirs.

MARBOT AND THE YOUNG COSSACK

IN all history there is no more terrible tale of suffering than that of the retreat of the French army from Moscow in the winter of 1812, and in all history there is no greater record of heroism.

Across snowy plains where the snow lay feet thick, through icy, half-frozen rivers they fought their way step by step for hundreds of miles, till they reached the deep river Berezina, where the bridges gave way under pressure of the fugitives, and a vast mass of men and horses were seen struggling in the stream. But at length with enormous loss the barrier was safely passed, and the survivors were protected by Marshal Ney and the rearguard of the 'Grande Armée.'

It was on December 2, exactly seven years after the battle of Austerlitz, that the event happened of which I am going to tell you. The Russian troops had pressed so closely on the French army that it was impossible to avoid a fight, and General Maison, in command of the second division, drew up his infantry in squares so as successfully to repulse the charges of the Russian cavalry. Marbot and his horse formed part of the division, and when marching their post was in the extreme rear.

Now in the beginning of the Russian campaign a Dutch banker named Van Berchem, who had been at school with Marbot, had placed under his old friend's care his only son, a boy of sixteen, then just entering the

23rd Horse. The young man was quick and clever, eager to serve the Emperor. Marbot soon found him useful and made him his secretary, ordering the boy to ride behind him, carrying the notes for his despatches, and it was here Van Berchem was to be found when the French army, in the midst of a wide plain with the cold more intense than we in England can dream of, was attacked by the Russian troops.

At first the French merely stood on the defensive and drove back their enemies, but when the hordes of Cossacks dashed forward and picked off the Imperial officers with their long lances, Ney ordered General Maison to charge.

Marbot, riding with the 23rd Cuirassiers, came face to face with a Cossack regiment from the borders of the Black Sea, who, as was their custom, spread themselves out, wheeled and galloped headlong across the plain till they were suddenly brought up by reaching a ravine, a rare thing in that country. Seeing that further flight was out of the question they turned and faced their foes, forming rapidly into a compact body, and defending themselves with their lances.

The ground, covered with ice, was very slippery, and it was impossible for the French horses to charge at a gallop, and in that way to bear the Cossacks over the edge of the precipice behind them. When, therefore, Marbot and his force came up at a slow trot, they were received by a wall of lances thirteen feet long, against which the short sabres of the French were utterly useless. For a moment the two squadrons paused thus, watching each other. Then Marbot shouted an order that each man should seize one of the lances of the enemy in his left hand, turn it away from his body and dash on so that the French swords might be brought into effect in a fight at close quarters. With a sudden spring he carried out his own plan, and followed by the rest of the regiment he succeeded in closing with the

Cossacks, but not without receiving a bad wound in his knee from a white-bearded man who stood far back in the ranks. Even in the excitement of battle the pain was frightful, and Marbot's only thought was to avenge himself at once. But in his way there stood two young men under twenty, whose splendid clothes proclaimed them to be of rank, and by them, as a sort of guardian, was an old man quite unarmed.

The elder of the youths flung himself on Marbot and attacked him furiously, but he was so young that Marbot could not bring himself to kill him, and merely disarming him pushed him behind, and ordered Van Berchem to guard him safely. Scarcely, however, had Marbot turned his back than he heard a double shot—a ball whizzed past his ear and pierced the collar of his cloak, while its fellow lay buried in the head of Van Berchem.

In this manner did the young Cossack repay the life that had been given him.

Mad with rage and grief Marbot advanced on the murderer, who was already aiming at him with his second pistol. But terrified by the look of Marbot the Cossack cried, dropping his arm :

‘I see death, I see death in your eyes!’

‘Traitor, you see aright,’ was the answer, as he avenged the murder of Van Berchem whom he loved.

At this moment Marbot was as one possessed, and riding to the other young Cossack he seized him by the throat. Already his sabre was lifted when the old tutor threw himself between them, crying :

‘In the name of your mother, spare this boy, *he* has done nothing.’

The words made Marbot pause, and, his mind all on fire as it was, he seemed to behold a hand that he knew laid across the youth's bosom, and to hear his mother's voice saying : ‘Forgive, forgive!’ His raised arm fell

to his side, and he signed to his men to take his two prisoners to the rear.

Between the agony of his wound and the strange scene he had gone through Marbot was so overcome that had the battle continued he was not in a condition



"In the name of your Mother Spare this boy"

HOFMAN

to issue orders, but luckily it was soon over. Some of the Cossacks escaped by scrambling down the ravine, but many of these perished in the snowdrifts.

In the evening he commanded the two prisoners to be led into his tent, and there he learned from the old tutor that this youth and the murderer of Van Berchem were

the sons of a powerful Cossack chief who, having lost a leg at Austerlitz, could no longer fight except by proxy.

As he looked at the thin and delicate face of the boy before him, Marbot understood that the cold and hardships of war would speedily carry him to the grave also, so he desired both to be set at liberty.

This was almost more than the old tutor had dared to hope, and as he left the tent he bade farewell to their captor in these words :

‘ When she thinks of her elder son, the mother of these two boys will curse you, but when she gazes at the younger she will bless you, and your mother too, because you have spared her only remaining child.’

From Marbot's Memoirs.

HERACLES THE DRAGON-KILLER.

Two little boys lay in one cradle in the city of Thebes. The world was very new to them, for they had only opened their eyes on it a few hours before, and most babies would have been as sleepy and helpless as little blind kittens. But Heracles and Iphicles were much wiser as well as much bigger than other babies, and Alcmena their mother and her maids already felt half afraid of them, as people often are of what they do not understand.

‘Leave me now, I would rest,’ said Alcmena, leaning back on her pillows, and soon she was asleep, with the children lying in the cradle in a corner of the room. Not a sound could be heard, when suddenly from under a chest against the wall two long thin black shapes moved noiselessly across the floor. When they reached the cradle they reared themselves up, one on each side, and darted their flat heads and forked tongues at the babies.

Iphicles shrank back with a cry, but Heracles sat up, and seizing the snakes in his hands crushed the life out of them. They were dead before they had time to sting, but, dead as they were, Iphicles was sorely frightened, and his shrieks brought back his mother’s maids, who lifted the horrible things out of the cradle. Great was the wrath of Alcmena when, waking, she heard what had befallen her sons, and she spoke many hard words to the women whose duty it was to watch over them, not

knowing that the serpents had been sent by a wicked enchantress, who hated Alcmena because she had such a brave and strong child as Heracles, while she herself had none. In the old Greek story, told several thousand years ago, this wicked enchantress is called



Hera, the wife of their god Zeus, but the real truth is that she was just a cross old fairy or witch.

This time her wicked plan of sending the two serpents had failed. They could not frighten the child Heracles, and he was too strong for them. Then the witch thought of a magical spell by which she compelled Heracles to

do everything that he was told to do by a little weak cowardly king named Eurystheus, who reigned over another city of Greece called Mycenæ. It was a small town, but very strongly built; the walls and the gate, made of enormous stone, are still standing, and great loads of golden ornaments worn by the old kings have been found in their graves.

There was not a boy in all Greece so big and strong as Heracles, or one who could wrestle so well and shoot so straight at a mark. As to other lessons, his tutor was a wise person called Cheiron, who had the body and legs of a horse and the head and chest of a man. He and Heracles were very fond of each other, and when they were tired of talking, Cheiron would give the boy a ride on his back, or they would run a race, and the kind old centaur took care to let Heracles win sometimes.

Heracles was not more than seventeen when the fame of his strength had spread so far throughout Greece that kings of the great cities began to send for him to help them in getting rid of their enemies, whether man or beast. By this time he was the servant of Eurystheus, and he seldom had time to help anyone because Eurystheus sent him to do so many dangerous things, always hoping that in one adventure or another he would fail and be killed, to please the enchantress.

One day Eurystheus said to him 'Messengers have arrived from my people at Nemæa to tell me that a huge lion has come down from the mountains and nightly carries off some of their goats, or even their children. Go, therefore, and destroy him, or it will be ill for you.' And Heracles, taking his bow and arrows and a thick club, hastened to obey. No adventure could have suited him better. It needed both strength and cunning, for no spear could pierce the lion's hide, nor any sword-thrust wound him. Therefore Heracles dared not attack the beast in open fight, but met him where the trees grew close upon the mountain

side, and he could gain shelter among them. Thus, dealing a blow with his club in the face of the lion, and instantly leaping quickly aside behind a rock or a tree



A RIDE ON THE CENTAUR'S BACK

trunk, he drove the lion step by step back into a cavern ; then throwing himself on the great beast before he had time to spring, strangled him in his arms as he had done the serpents. When the lion struggled no more Heracles

knew he was dead, and took the skin to cover himself, for it was different from other skins, and he who wore it was safe from all weapons.

He had the skin made neatly into a kind of short tunic, the hind legs passing over his shoulders, and the head hanging down in front over his thighs.

As he returned through the city of Nemæa, dressed in the lion's skin, the villagers came out to praise him for their deliverance, but when he again stood before Eurystheus he found that there was more work for him to do.

'The nine-headed monster which dwells in the marshes of Lerna southwards on the sea has poisoned with its breath the fishermen who live by the coast, till there is no man to sail his boat on the waters. Let it be your task to destroy that beast, as you did the lion; only take heed that it does not destroy you. Out of the nine heads there is one that cannot die, and as to the others, for every one that you cut off two more will spring forth, so that the slaying of the lion is but child's play to this adventure.'

Thus spoke Eurystheus, and Heracles mounted his chariot, which was driven by his nephew Iolaus, son of Iphicles. Together they drove many miles south of Mycenæ, taking counsel how best to overcome the nine-headed monster. Anxiously they gazed over the marshes of Lerna, but nothing did they see of him, only traces of vast feet and claws in the soft mud, and flowers drooping and withered, as if some poisonous breath had touched them. At last they traced the marks of the feet down to the sea shore where huge rocks were tumbled together, as if giants had played with them.

'He is in there,' whispered Iolaus, 'but how shall we get him out?'

'Let us make a fire, and heat the bronze tips of our arrows in it till they are red hot,' said Heracles, 'and

we will shoot them into his skin till it stings. But, first, pick up those branches of trees which are lying about, and kindle them till they burn brightly, and as fast as I cut off one head lay the flaming boughs on the place, lest the two heads grow again.' And they two lit the fire, out of sight of the monster's lair, that he might not spring on them before they were ready.

At length the arrows were red hot, and the logs blazing.

'I will climb up here,' said Heracles, 'and shoot the arrows through this crevice, and when he is awake and coming forth, I will stand behind that rock, with my sword drawn, so that his breath may not poison me as he rushes by.'

But the hydra's skin was tough, and the first arrows shot by Heracles fell harmless. So he bade Iolaus gather fresh logs and heap them on the fire, while he himself held his arrows in it till they glowed red hot. Then he returned to the crevice and rained down the arrows thick and fast, till the monster rose up with a roar, and sleepily looked about him, to see whence fell this terrible hail of blows. At that, Heracles hastily leaped down and, drawing his sword, signed to Iolaus to hold ready his burning branch.

Yet, though no more arrows fell, those that were lodged in the creature's hide began to prick him sorely, and snorting loudly with pain he dashed out of his lair, crashing through a small tree that grew at the entrance. Heracles swung his sword and struck, and the head nearest him rolled on the ground, but Iolaus missed his aim with the branch, and two heads vomiting fire took the place of the dead one. Again Heracles struck, and this time Iolaus was quicker and, laying his brand on the spot where the heads had been, stopped the growth of fresh ones.

And so the fight went on, and never did Heracles take part in so terrible a combat. Luckily for him, the

hydra was big and clumsy, and his heavy body was hard to turn, for both Heracles and Iolaus were forced to keep behind him, lest the poisonous breath



from the heads should overcome them. Swiftly though they sprang from one side to the other, their blows sometimes failed to hit, but at length eight of the heads were lying on the ground, and there remained only the

ninth, which they knew could not die. Then the battle raged more fiercely than before, and Heracles was very weary and had less strength for it. Now Iolaus could not help him, and he must trust to himself, and with the loss of his eight heads the hydra seemed to have grown lighter and more nimble. Had it not been for the skin of the Nemæan lion, which Heracles wore about him, he could never have gained the day; but covering his head with the skin, so that he could escape the monster's breath, he gave a mighty stroke at the soft part under the neck, and the head which could not die went to join its fellows.

'Quick! into that hole,' panted Heracles, and Iolaus dragged it by the mane, which seemed alive, and thrust it in.

'The rock,' gasped Heracles once more, for he trembled with fatigue so that he could hardly speak, and together they pushed the rock on top of the hole, and the immortal head was imprisoned for ever.

'I should be lying by it if it had not been for thee, Iolaus,' said Heracles when he had rested for a little; 'but now yoke the horses to the chariot, I have somewhat to do'; and while Iolaus did his bidding, he drew out his arrows from the carcase of the hydra, and dipped each in his blood, so that henceforward no wound that these arrows made could ever be healed. After that he put one of the heads in his wallet, as a token for Eurystheus.

But the king of Mycenæ scowled as he listened to the tale of Heracles, and instead of the praise the hero had expected, for he gloried in his strength, Eurystheus spoke cold words.

'It is nought, O Heracles, for the monster would be alive now had not Iolaus helped you. I have another task for you which this time you must accomplish alone. Go and capture the boar which has overrun Arcadia, and bring it *alive* to me.' And with wrath in his heart, Heracles set forth.

Out from the land of Argolis he went, and across the plain of Mantinea, till he reached the mountains of Arcadia, where snow was lying soft and thick ; but the boar was not there. Hastening to the nearest village, he asked tidings of him, and was told that a few days since he had passed that way carrying off children, as well as goats and sheep, who were straying in the road. From place to place Heracles followed the boar, and the tale was always the same, but he only came up with him in the west of Arcadia, on the banks of the river Alpheus. How he longed to shoot some of his poisoned arrows at this ravager of homes, but Eurystheus had commanded that he was to be taken alive, and Heracles had no power to disobey. Then began a weary chase of the beast, when Heracles tried to steal up to the boar in his sleep, and throw a noosed rope round his neck ; but it was Heracles who slept and not the boar, and more than once he only awoke in time to save himself by flight from the great tusks that were so near him. Still, in the end, he contrived to force the boar back and back, till they reached the mountains which looked into Argolis.

Here at last the boar showed signs of fatigue. He was used to resting for many days at a time after his hunting, and Heracles had allowed him but little rest, and no food. In the beginning of the chase he had seemed tireless, but now he and Heracles appeared to have changed places, and he felt as if he could walk no more. It was so difficult, too, for the boar to drag his feet up hill through this soft snow ; before long he should have to give in. And then, blind with weariness, he stumbled and fell, and the chance of Heracles had come.

As Heracles returned to Mycenæ with his prisoner, roped up so that he limped on one fore and one hind leg, the people ran out of their houses to stare at their fallen enemy, and to offer their thanks to his captor.

But when the two had passed through the gates of the city, and stood before the king himself at the entrance of the palace, Eurystheus fled with a cry of fear.

‘Save me ! Save me !’ he cried, almost dead with fright at the sight of the hideous creature ; and he ran down steps leading to cellars under his palace, and hid himself in a huge pot, where he remained sitting until Heracles had taken away the boar.

‘Never let such monsters come inside the city again,’ said he. ‘When next Heracles conquers anything I will behold it from the walls.’

Curious to say, that though Heracles was obliged, by the magic spells, to do whatsoever Eurystheus commanded him, the king hardly dreaded the boar himself more than he did his servant ; and no sooner had Heracles overcome one foe than his master looked out for another who might remove him far from Mycenæ. So when he at length felt sure that he could leave his pot without the risk of being swallowed up in the jaws of the beast, or being gored to death by his terrible tusks, he ordered Heracles to be summoned to his presence.

‘In the lake of Stymphalus, which lies in the land of Arcadia,’ said Eurystheus, ‘dwell the man-eating birds, with claws and beaks of brass, who can shoot the brazen feathers of their wings as if they were arrows. They live on a high rock with sides as smooth as glass, so that none can climb it. The king of that country is my friend, and he has sent messengers to beg that you would help him, for his bravest warriors have been carried away in the claws of these monsters.’

Slowly Heracles departed from the presence of Eurystheus and took his way towards Arcadia. But as he went he pondered in his mind how best he should overcome the man-eating birds whose armour of brass no spear could break. One plan after another he thought of, but all seemed hopeless. Only one thing was clear ;

he must not let the birds catch sight of him, or he, too, would fall a victim.

‘What could he do?’ It seemed quite hopeless. Then all at once he knew. ‘If I can’t kill them, at any rate I can frighten them from the country,’ he murmured to himself; and he turned aside to a village in the hills, and stopped at a small house.

‘I want you to fashion me a brazen rattle which shall make so great and terrible a noise that they who hear it shall be deaf to the day of their death,’ he said to the man who opened the door to him.

‘That can I do with ease,’ was the answer; ‘wait for a few hours, and you shalt carry it away with you.’

All that day Heracles sat in the sun, his club by his side, and his lion’s skin on the ground before him, till in the evening the man came out, bearing with him the brazen rattle.

‘If you would only have a little noise,’ he explained, ‘pull out this pin; if a great one, pull out this; if one to sound to the ends of the world, then pull out all the pins together. And now, farewell.’

Heracles mounted his chariot well pleased, and his horses flew swift as the wind, till at noon next day he reached Stymphalus. There he jumped down and walked cautiously round the lake, keeping in the shadow of the tall reeds which grew along the edge. At length he saw the rock of which Eurystheus had told him, and the sun’s rays caught something bright and glistening on the top.

‘Those are the birds,’ he thought, ‘and they are moving. Perhaps they are getting ready to seek their prey. If they hunt in the village they will fly past here; I will hide myself in this clump of bulrushes, and it may be that I can knock one or two of the hindermost with my club.’

Thinking thus, he stepped in the water where the

reeds stood thickest, choosing a place from which he could catch sight of the rock of the birds. Next he took some wax from his wallet, and put a piece in each ear, and then, pulling out all the pins in the brazen rattle, he whirled it round, his eyes fixed on the rock.



HERACLES FIGHTS THE STYMPHALIAN BIRDS

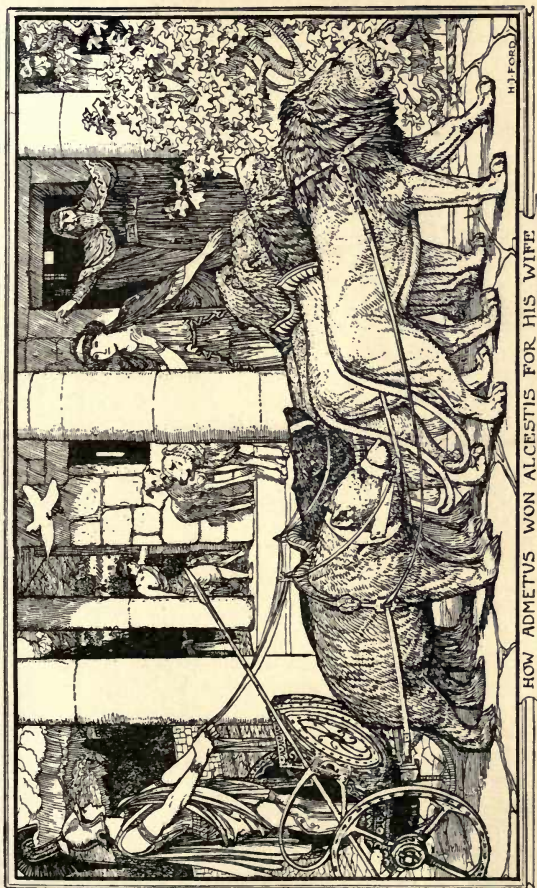
With a screech nearly as loud as the noise of the rattle, if Heracles had only been able to hear it, they sprang up, turning round and round, not knowing what it was or where that dreadful sound came from. Backwards and forwards they flew, hoping to escape from

it, yet still the shrieking, roaring noise followed them. At last, in despair, they darted low across the lake towards the rushes where Heracles lay hidden, the rattle in his left hand, the club in his right.

On they came, flying low, and Heracles let all pass but two. Then he swung his club, and quick as lightning he struck first one and then the other, till they fell into the water and were drowned, the noise of the rattle stifling their cries. The rest, not knowing, flew on and on and on, and never stopped till they reached a desert island in the Black Sea, where they could hear the rattle no more.

To tell the tale of all the deeds of Heracles would fill a book, for always as fast as he had accomplished one, Eurystheus sent him forth to do another. Now it was to get the girdle of the queen of the Amazons, a race of warlike women, for the princess his daughter; now it was to bring a mad bull from the far-off isle of Crete to Mycenæ; now it was to clean in a single day the farmyard of Augeas, king of Elis, where he kept three thousand cattle. If he succeeded, Heracles was to have three hundred of the finest sheep and oxen for himself. But when he turned the river Alpheus right across the yard, leaving the stones as white and shining as those at the bottom of the sea, the king refused to fulfil his promise, saying that Heracles was only the servant of Eurystheus, and therefore could claim no reward. Far better would it have been for Augeas if he had kept his word, for in wrath Heracles slew him and his sons also. These and many more things he did, and at last the spell cast over him by the goddess was ended, and he was free.

It was then that he performed a deed very different from any of the tasks which Eurystheus had set him, or indeed from any which he had wrought for himself.



HOW ADMETUS WON ALCESTIS FOR HIS WIFE

In Thessaly lived Admetus, son of the King of Pheræ, a young man taller and stronger than any of his fellows, who had sailed on board the *Argo* in search of the Golden Fleece, and had joined in the chase of the Calydonian boar. Of all the maidens of Greece, none seemed so fair to Admetus as Alcestis, daughter of Pelias, but her father turned away from his entreaties, declaring that none should be her husband save the man who should yoke a team of lions and bears to his chariot. So Admetus went away with a sad heart, for he knew not how to accomplish the bidding of Pelias.

With downcast eyes he wandered over the plain, where he met with Apollo, the beautiful sun-god who loved him, and with whom he had tended his sheep in the flowery fields. And Apollo smiled when he heard the tale of woe of Admetus, and bade him be of good cheer, for he would catch the lions and bears and yoke them to the chariot. This he did during the night, and when Pelias rose from his bed he beheld them yoked to the chariot in front of his house, and Admetus standing by them.

Then, for very shame, he was forced to give Alcestis, his daughter, to Admetus, and they went away and lived happily together till Admetus fell ill of a mortal sickness.

Now it happened that when Admetus lay in his cradle by the side of his mother, the spinning women entered the room and looked at him, as they had looked at the baby Meleager, and Apollo the sun-god came with them. At his prayer they bestowed on Admetus the gift of immortality—he should never die if he could find someone else to die instead of him. Alcestis, his wife, knew this, so when she beheld him white and still on his bed before her she feared nothing, ‘for,’ she thought, ‘his father and mother are very old; one is blind and the other cannot hear, and nought in this world gives

them pleasure. Surely they will not refuse to go across the dark river into Hades, and leave him to me, who loves him so much ?' But the old people said 'No ; truly they could not enjoy the sun and all beautiful things as once they did, but still life was worth something after all ; and if the gods willed that Admetus their son should die—well, die he must.'

Thus they spake ; and Alcestis returned to her husband, and stood watching him while he slept.

'It is not true, my beloved ; you shall not die, for I, thy wife, will go down into Hades instead of thee. And the darkness of that underworld shall be bright to me, remembering that you are in the sun.' So, leaving him sleeping, she passed beyond the door, and took her way to the underworld.

Soon all Greece had heard the story of Alcestis and how, for love of her husband, she had entered the boat of Charon the ferryman, and had crossed the river Styx and dwelt among the shadows in the kingdom of Hades ; and Heracles heard with the rest.

'I will fetch her back,' cried he, 'for the gods will not suffer this thing to be, and they will show me the path, and bid Charon bring us again into the light of day.' And the gods listened, and sent Hermes to be his guide, and together they crossed the river and entered the fields of asphodel, where Alcestis was wandering alone.

'Come,' said Heracles, holding out his hand ; and she came, and was led back by Heracles to the side of Admetus.



HERACLES-BRINGS-ALCESTIS-BACK-FROM-HADES



OLD JEFFERY

WHO was Old Jeffery? *What* was Old Jeffery? Nobody has ever known, nobody can explain how he, or it, first frightened, and then amused and then wearied, the large, lively, and well-educated family of a country clergyman. They did not live in a haunted house. Old Jeffery was not the ghost of anyone who had died in the house, for it was quite a new house, recently built after a fire.

Nobody ever saw Old Jeffery; unlike good children, he was 'heard and not seen.'

THE WESLEY CHILDREN

First I must tell you who were the young people and children that Old Jeffery played with, and something about their father and mother; all of them were very clever and remarkable people, well known in their time, two of them becoming famous, but *they* were not in the house when Old Jeffery played his pranks.

While queen Anne was still alive, and afterwards when her cousin, George I., had newly come to the throne, a large family of children were growing up in the rectory of Epworth in Lincolnshire. Their father, Samuel Wesley, was a man who had always depended on himself and never troubled his friends to give him money or to find him places. With 2*l.* 16*s.* in his pocket he walked to Oxford, and studied in Exeter College, earning money

by giving lessons to those richer and more ignorant than himself, till he was old enough to be ordained. Soon after he married Miss Susannah Ammesley, who was no more afraid of poverty than himself.

In all they had nineteen children, but many of them died when they were babies, and only ten were living at the time when the strange things happened that you are going to hear about. They were very poor, of course, but luckily the children were all clever and strong, and their mother took care that they did not waste their time, and that they should give their whole mind to whatever they were doing at the moment. Samuel was the eldest of all; he was in London, a master in Westminster School, and secretary to the Bishop of Rochester. And next came Sukey, her mother's namesake. Molly, Hetty, Emilia and Nancy followed, and then the younger ones—John, afterwards famous as the founder of the sect of 'Wesleyans,' who took their title from him, Patty, Charles who composed many beautiful anthems, and little Keziah.

Nowadays, when children as a rule will not take the trouble to learn to read till they are seven or eight, and even then stumble and stammer over the words, it is interesting to know how Mrs. Wesley managed. 'None of them were taught to read till they were five years old, and the day before, everyone's work was appointed them, and a charge given that none should come into the room from nine till twelve, or from two till five, which were our school hours. One day was allowed the child wherein to learn its letters, and each of them did in that time know all its letters, great and small, except Molly and Nancy, who were a day and a half before they knew them perfectly, for which I thought them very dull; but the reason why I thought them so was because the rest learned them so readily, and Samuel, who was the first child I ever taught, learned the alphabet in a few hours.

‘As soon as they knew the letters, they were first put to spell and read one line, then a verse, never leaving till perfect in their lesson, were it shorter or longer.’

So what the little Wesleys knew they knew clearly and well, and did not mix up one thing with another. Somehow the parents contrived to save enough money to send their sons to good schools—Samuel and Charles to Westminster, and John to the Charterhouse, then and long after in the heart of the City of London. They all worked hard and were specially fond of Greek and Latin, and when they left school for Oxford, both Samuel and John studied Hebrew, while Charles gave much of his time to music.

It was *after* Old Jeffery’s time, and during Charles’s school life at Westminster, that an event occurred which, trifling though it seemed, might have altered the course of European history. A letter was received at Epworth Rectory, from an Irish gentleman, one Mr. Wellesley, pointing out that though he was not aware of any relationship between himself and the Rector of Epworth, yet that their names were in reality the same, and should one of the Rector’s sons be called Charles, he was ready to make him his heir and leave him all his money. In the meantime he would pay all his school bills.

This offer was gratefully received by the boy’s father, who could very ill afford the necessary fees and the money for travelling between London and Lincolnshire. For several years the matter was left thus, when suddenly Mr. Wellesley visited Charles at Westminster, told him what he proposed to do for him, and asked if he would go back to Ireland with him at once. The boy hesitated, saying that he would like to think it over, and also to consult his father, but when he did so, Mr. Wesley answered that he must decide for himself.

Now Charles had set his heart on going to Christ Church, Oxford, where he had just been elected to a studentship. The life of a country squire in Ireland with its hunting and fishing, so fascinating to most boys, had no charms for him, so he wrote gratefully to decline. Mr. Wellesley was surprised and rather disappointed, but soon began to look for an heir in Charles's place. He found one in a poor young man from a neighbouring county, who, to please him, changed his own name of Colley for that of Wellesley. The wealth of this young heir, as well as his pleasant manners and talents, brought him into notice. He was later made Earl of Mornington and became the grandfather of young Arthur Wellesley, better known as the Duke of Wellington. Had Charles Wesley accepted the position, the other young man would very likely have remained unknown, and his grandson, the great Duke, would never have had the chances of which he made the best.

However, it was almost a miracle that these two most famous of the Wesley family, John and Charles, had ever lived to go to school at all. When John was six and Charles only two months old a fire broke out one night in the old rectory, deliberately kindled by some of Mr. Wesley's parishioners, who were furious with him for preaching against their evil ways. Twice before they had laid branches of burning wood about the house, but each time rain had put them out. On the third occasion one of the children was wakened by part of the blazing thatch falling on her feet, and at the same moment her father was aroused by a cry of 'Fire!' in the street. He awoke his wife, who was ill in another room, and bade Sukey and Molly not lose an instant in taking her to a place of safety. Then he rushed on to the nursery, and thrust Charles, the baby, into the nurse's arms, and called to the others to follow her. The little girls jumped up, and made their way through the stifling smoke into the hall, which was



locked, but John was a sound sleeper and heard nothing, while in the darkness no one noticed that he was missing.

‘The key, the key of the front door!’ cried Mr. Wesley, but it was upstairs in his own room, and the staircase was already in flames.

Now the door key must be got, or they would all be burnt where they stood ; so, winding his handkerchief over his mouth, Mr. Wesley dashed up the stairs, returning with the key in his hand, and the staircase blazing behind him. But even when the front door was unlocked, safety seemed as far off as ever, for a violent wind from the outside blew the flames inward, and they all shrank back from them. Frantic with terror, some of the children scrambled up to the high windows, and squeezed themselves through, while others contrived to climb over a heap of smouldering furniture, and reach a garden door at the back.

Mrs. Wesley was too ill to do either, and had almost made up her mind to die where she was, but, gathering all her courage, she sprung through the blazing door-way and found herself in the street, only slightly scorched.

It was at this moment that John’s voice was heard. He had been awakened by the light of the flames, and, terrified at finding himself alone in the burning room, rushed wildly to the door, but as the way was barred by fire, he managed to climb up to a chest under the window and shouted for help.

The hearts of his father and mother stood still ; they had quite forgotten him, or, rather, they had taken for granted he was with his sisters. His father turned to the staircase, but that fell in with the touch of his foot. Then he ran outside again, to find that one man had hoisted himself on the shoulders of another, and was thus able to reach the window from which John was crying for help. Hardly was John rescued and placed in his arms when the whole roof fell in, but all the members of the family were safe.

THE NOISES IN THE HOUSE

In course of time a new rectory was built, and the lives of the Wesleys flowed on quietly enough. Samuel had become a clergyman and was married, John was at Charterhouse, Charles at school somewhere, for though in the year 1716, when the family were disturbed day and night by strange noises, he was only six or seven, children were sent early from home in those days, and he is never once mentioned in the accounts given by the rest.

The first allusion in the family letters to the disturbances which for nearly two months upset and perplexed the household is to be found in a letter of Mrs. Wesley's to Samuel, dated January 12, 1717. She writes to say how thankful she was to hear that he was alive as they had all 'been in the greatest panic imaginable almost a month,' thinking that either he or one of his brothers must be dead. It seems odd that being so frightened they did not hasten to inquire; but nobody thought of doing this, and they waited in fear and trembling till Samuel's 'packet' arrived.

The reason why they were so certain that someone must have met with a misfortune was this. On December 1, six weeks before Mrs. Wesley's letter, the maid, who had but lately entered the family, on passing the dining-room door was startled by hearing groans close to her, as of a person suffering agonies of pain. She looked about but could find nothing, and then, suddenly taking alarm, she ran to tell her tale to her mistress. Mrs. Wesley assured her she was dreaming, and the girls all laughed at her; but it was of no use. She had heard the groans, she said, and it was vain to pretend that she hadn't, and what was more, if they would only have patience, they might hear them too.

For a few days all went on as usual, and then one day Emilia, who was about seventeen, told her mother

that for several nights they had all been disturbed by loud knocks and groans like those Nanny Marshall had spoken of. Mrs. Wesley paid no more heed to her daughter's tale than she had done to that of the maid, and made answer that 'the rats which John Maw had frightened from his house by blowing a horn had come into theirs.' She ordered that without loss of time a horn should be got, and blown loudly, much to the wrath of the second girl Molly, who declared that if the noise really *was* made by a spirit it would be furious at being treated as rats, and would probably make itself ten times more troublesome. And so it proved, for whereas hitherto the noise had only come by night, after the blowing of the horn the knocks were heard at all hours, and the latches of the doors lifted before people's fingers touched them.

It was about seven in the morning, soon after this, that Emilia came to fetch her mother to the nursery, determined that Mrs. Wesley should know they ~~were~~ not making a fuss about nothing. When she opened the door the mother heard the noises for the first time, and, though no more frightened than her daughters had been after the first, was naturally very much surprised. To begin with, the knocks seemed to come from the foot of the bed, then from the head.

'If you really are a spirit, speak to me,' cried Mrs. Wesley, tapping the floor with her foot several times, with little pauses in between. In an instant the knocks were repeated *under her feet*, exactly as she had made them.

'Answer me, too,' said little Kezzy, the youngest of the family, jumping out of bed and stamping; and without a pause the raps were continued exactly as *she* gave them. Kezzy thought that the spirit which Emilia called 'Jeffery' was nearly as good a playfellow as the absent Charles, and used to run from room to room, knocking as she went, and Jeffery never failed to reply to her.

‘Do you notice,’ whispered at last one of the girls to another, ‘that when morning and evening my father prays for the king and prince of Wales, Jeffery knocks louder than ever, and, what is stranger still, that our father never seems to hear it?’

‘That is strange indeed,’ answered the other. ‘Does mother know, think you? Let us ask her.’ And they hastened to the schoolroom where the younger children were just finishing their morning lessons. Mrs. Wesley turned pale as she listened to them, for she called to mind the belief in the village that the person whose ears were deaf to such sounds was certain to fall ill or die, yet, on the other hand, the fact that Mr. Wesley did *not* hear them, might so frighten him when he learned how other people did, that it might bring about the very misfortune she dreaded. Therefore she pretended that she thought nothing of it, and bade Molly and Nancy be careful not to disturb their father with such tales.

This is perhaps the strangest part of the story. Why did Mr. Wesley not hear the noises overhead when all the others did? And why did the neighbours opposite, who opened their windows and listened when the noises were louder, never succeed in hearing them? The girls said Old Jeffery was a Jacobite, and on the side of king James ‘over the water,’ the ‘Old Pretender,’ for the noises interrupted the prayers for king George, who was his reigning rival.

Jeffery had spent about a fortnight amusing himself by annoying the family, who at length ceased to be frightened at his tricks, when Emilia left her mother’s room one night, and went into Sukey’s. The moment she closed the door, the windows began to rattle and the bells to ring, and then a tremendous noise was heard in the kitchen below, as if some one had dropped a huge piece of coal on the floor, and it had broken in pieces. Snatching up Sukey’s candle, Emilia went downstairs,

but all was quiet and tidy as usual. She was passing the great screen on her way to the door, when she heard a loud knock close to her head. She ran round to the inside of the screen, but as she did so the knocks came from the place she had just left. Again she followed it, and chased the noise several times, but finding it always went somewhere else, gave it up, when she observed that the latch of the back kitchen door, leading to the 'worst stairs' was moving up and down. The girl then looked out, but could see nobody, and on trying to shut the door found that it resisted, as if some person were holding it back. At last, with a violent effort she gave it a bang and locked it, but even after this the latch continued to move up and down. However, Emilia was tired of Jeffery's freaks and went away to bed, hearing as she did so a noise as if a great stone had been thrown among the bottles under the 'best stairs.'

When Emilia reached her room she found Hetty, who never went to bed before her father, sitting on the garret stairs. After telling her all that had happened, the younger sister passed on, but scarcely was her door shut when Hetty heard a heavy step, almost like a man's, coming down behind her, with the sound of rustling, as if some one were trailing a heavy silk dress. She was more nervous than any of her sisters, and trembled in her sleep if the knocks came near her; so at this new and quite unaccustomed sound, she 'flew rather than ran' to the protection of the braver Emilia.

Except the big dog, which always shuddered and took shelter with one of the family as soon as the sounds began, the only people greatly alarmed by Jeffery were the servants. At length, when the maid grew almost incapable of doing her work, Mr. Wesley was told—even at the risk of his dying of fright through having heard nothing. 'At first,' says Emilia, 'he

smiled and gave no answer, but was more careful than usual from that time to see us in bed, imagining it to be some of us young women that sat up late and made a noise.' This so provoked Emilia that she hoped the sounds might go on till Mr. Wesley was quite convinced it was not they who knocked ; and she was soon gratified, as the following night nine knocks were heard by his bed. After that both he and his wife, hunting for the cause of the trouble, heard also the crash as of the breaking of bottles, and, stranger still, as if a bag of money was being emptied at their feet. In vain Mrs. Wesley begged the spirit to speak, and say if it were Sammy, bidding it knock if that was so, but as it was silent for the rest of the night the parents 'hoped that it was not against his death,' that is, was not a death warning.

Mr. Wesley now began to keep a short diary, from December 21 to December 29 ; he heard the noises first on December 21, and on December 29 they 'were very boisterous and disturbing.'

'Jeffery' was evidently no respecter of persons, and neither servants nor children were safe from his tricks ; but it was Hetty who was 'more particularly troubled by him.' He 'commonly was nearer her than the rest, which she took notice of, and was much frightened, because she thought it had a particular spight at her.' Still Hetty, like her sisters, saw nothing ; only Mrs. Wesley declared that she once beheld an animal like a headless badger run out from under Hetty's bed, and of course the man and maid were not behind her with stories. On the whole, however, Jeffery was obliging, and when Mrs. Wesley 'earnestly desired that she might not be disturbed between five and six in the morning,' never made any noise at that hour, and as long as the prayers for the king and prince of Wales (George I. and his son) were left out, as happened on Sunday, when they were given in Church,

he made no objection to any of the petitions offered up by Mr. Wesley.

‘For a month,’ writes Emilia in her account to Jack, nine or ten years later, ‘it continued in full majesty, night and day.’ All this time great chains were heard falling, the man in the ‘trailing nightgown’ walked up and down stairs at all hours, Nancy was pursued from room to room, the bed on which she sat

Old Jeffrey



was lifted up, and when she swept there was a sound as of sweeping behind her, at which she grumbled, thinking Jeffery might have saved her the trouble; the family pewter was thrown about the kitchen, and one Sunday, to Mr. Wesley's ‘no small amazement, his trencher danced upon the table a pretty while, without anybody stirring the table.’ Unluckily, adds Sukey, ‘an adventurous wretch took it up and spoiled

the sport, for it remained still for ever after.' Quite clearly, Jeffery was a 'spright' who knew his own mind.

He disapproved of cards, and one night when Sukey and some of her sisters began to play, he hastened from the nursery, where he had been busy with his usual pranks, in order to knock loudly under their feet. They understood the signal and left off, and immediately Jeffery returned to the nursery, and remained there till morning. On the other hand, he seems to have loved dancing, and would lock himself in a 'matted chamber' next the nursery, where he could be heard by the family dancing to his heart's content.

At length Mr. Wesley summoned another clergyman, Mr. Hoole, to come and help them, or if he could do nothing, at least to bear witness that his family had not invented these wonders. But Mr. Hoole, after sitting up with Mr. and Mrs. Wesley till one or two in the morning, and following Jeffery's knocks 'with fear' all over the house, was quite convinced of the truth of the story, and not sorry when the morning came, and he could return to his own peaceful house.

Mr. Hoole was luckier than Mr. Wesley, for old Jeffery took great liberties with *him*. 'I have been thrice pushed,' he writes, 'by an invisible power, once against the corner of my desk in the study, a second time against the door of the matted chamber, a third time against the right side of the frame of my study door, as I was going in.'

Whether Mr. Hoole's presence had frightened Jeffery as much as Jeffery had frightened Mr. Hoole we do not know, but certain it is that on the night of December 28, 1716, he 'loudly knocked in the nursery and departed.' Not for ever, as the family greatly hoped, but he 'remained pretty quiet' till January 24, when he began to knock again. Then, however, the knocking only took place at night, as had happened at

first, and 'grew less and less troublesome,' for *now* Jeffery only knocked outside instead of in, and 'seemed farther and farther off,' till, on April 1, its last disturbance is noted by Emilia.

By this time the whole village could talk of nothing but the strange sounds in the Rectory, which were made the most of by both the servants. The Wesleys themselves would gladly have dropped the subject. 'Send me some news,' writes Sukey to Sam on March 27, 'for we are secluded from the sight or hearing of anything except Jeffery,' while her mother adds, 'for my part, I am quite tired with hearing or speaking of it.'

And that was the end of Jeffery.

THE ADVENTURES OF A PRISONER

It was during the war between England and Napoleon that one August morning in 1809 a young Frenchman was sailing in a ship belonging to his father between Marseilles and Nice. Unluckily for him, the English were keeping a strict look-out on all the ports, and soon gave chase to the little vessel, which speedily surrendered, and the men were immediately put on board the cruiser. The young master, however, seeing what was before him, filled his pockets with money and anything else he thought of value, which, strange to say, he was allowed to keep.

The next day he and his fellow-prisoners were transferred to another ship, which spread its sails for England, and as the wind was fair they arrived quickly on the coast of Norfolk, where they found other ships and other captives to the number of several hundreds. These were at once taken to the different prisons marked out for them, of which Norman's Cross, not far from Peterborough, was the largest. It was built on a hill, a rare object in that flat fen country, and was dry and healthy. The great North Road between London and Edinburgh ran past the gates, and as the prisoner speaks of all the carriages and coaches he saw going by, the windows of the cells must have been larger and better placed than usual. Indeed, from the young man's description, the whole place seems to have been well managed, and he expressly says that

they were not treated with more severity than was needed to guard so many captives. Their food was good and plentiful, and consisted of fish or meat with bread and vegetables; and, wonderful to relate, the greatest care was taken by the prison officials that everything should be of the best, and that no short measure was given. Besides the food supplied by the English Government, who paid the French cooks chosen out from among the prisoners, the country people brought their goods to market every day, and sold them to those who had money to buy, in a large courtyard. There were also a school and a hospital, so that in many ways the prisoners were really more comfortable than their fellow-countrymen who were fighting in Spain or in Bavaria. Even their amusement had been thought of, which was not very common in those days, and there were several billiard-tables, the work of the prisoners themselves; but these gave rise to all sorts of disputes and quarrels, sometimes to duels, which more than once ended in the death of either one or other. Of course their swords had been taken from them, but they contrived to sharpen the blades of their knives and fix them into sticks to which they had added handles. With these weapons they fought to the death.

What struck the young Frenchman most about the gaol was the entire absence of the numerous high, strong walls and deep moats and iron spikes which made the strength of all the great prisons the young man had ever seen or read of. Instead of these were bands of sentries, constantly being changed, so always awake. In one way this made escape more difficult, in another more easy; for escape was never absent from the young man's mind, night or day.

But how to do it? During the year and a half that

passed by before he made the attempt many had tried before him, and few had been successful.

Like a wise man he began by counting up all the obstacles that he would have to triumph over, and to think how he could surmount each one. First there were the high wooden palings; well, he was used to climbing, and thought he could manage those. But outside them were the sentinels, only a few yards distant one from the other, with their muskets cocked and ready to fire. For the moment he would suppose that these were passed, and in that case a rope with a hook could get him to the top of the wall, but below it there were more sentries with more muskets.

And in addition to all these there was still another difficulty, and that was how to make any preparations without being discovered by his fellow-prisoners, who were busy working at toys and other things which they were allowed to sell, in the same room. One of them was so clever that after being in prison some years he earned 300*l.*, and, being fond of drawing, he readily undertook, under promise of secrecy, to map out the country between Norman's Cross and the sea, marking down all the roads and villages it would be necessary to pass. But it was in vain for the young Frenchman to try to learn the names of any of these; he could not even pronounce them. So he determined that if ever he was to get to the coast in safety he must never speak at all.

One difficulty he was spared, which in his own country would have stopped him at the outset, and that was the necessity of providing himself with a passport, giving an exact description of his appearance, of his age, his business, and all kinds of other details, that would have constantly to be shown to anyone who asked for it.

Little by little he changed some of his French money for the English gold with which the prisoners

were paid for their toys and baskets. At last he had about five sovereigns, with some silver and a few pennies; and these, with the French money he had left, he hid in the pockets of his blue sailor suit. A rope he had contrived to make out of wool, and a hook was fastened to the end of it, to catch on to the top of the wall. It is hardly possible that he could have done all this without his fellow-prisoners guessing his intentions, but they were good-natured creatures, and quite understood that 'there are none so blind as those who won't see.'

At last he was ready, and one dark night in February, when the wind was blowing a gale and driving torrents of icy rain in the face of any man who put his nose outside, the prisoner felt that he would never have a better chance of passing the sentinels. Into his jacket he thrust a strong knife, and hid a tinder-box in the lining of his cap. He also rolled a flannel shirt up very tight, and got it with some difficulty into his trouser pocket, while a pair of dry socks were stuffed in somewhere else. As for food, he had no room for anything except a couple of biscuits.

As soon as it was dark he signalled to his friend who was in the secret, and sitting behind him on the floor pretended to be mending something by the fitful light of the fire. What he really was doing was cutting a piece out of one of the boards which would give him room enough to pass into a cellar below, with a door leading into the yard. This he managed to accomplish more quickly than he expected. The board was replaced by his friend, and the fugitive slipped unnoticed behind a pile of faggots that were stacked in the yard.

As the night wore on the wind grew louder and louder, and the rain heavier and heavier. The poor man was nearly frozen, but he dared not move till he heard the prison clock strike eleven. That was the

time that he had fixed on as giving him the best chance, for he would have an hour in which to work before the sentinels were changed at midnight.

The wooden paling was soon cut through, and then came a breathless moment when he listened with straining ears to know if the sentinels had heard him. No ; there was nothing ; and as if to help him to escape, there came such a furious blast of wind and rain that nothing would stand against it. Seizing his opportunity, he threw up the rope, which luckily caught the first time, and, after pulling it as hard as he could, to make sure it would bear his weight, he climbed up it, hand over hand. At the top he listened again, when suddenly a door opened just under the wall. He stretched himself out quite flat, and after a minute or two of agonised waiting the sentry went back into his box, and shut out the rain and the wind. Then the Frenchman pulled up his rope and slid down the wall, towards some lamps which *must* be passed. Here he thought that all was over for him, as just as he was about to step out of the darkness a picket of five or six men crossed in front. But their heads were bent low against the wind and the rain, and again he was saved.

The boundary ditch once left behind he was a free man, and for several hours he walked on, keeping clear of the high road, where coaches and carriages might be met with at any time of night. The villages all seemed asleep, and even in the town of Oundle not a soul was stirring, though by this time the rain had ceased, and the moon was peeping out, showing him a small shed standing in a field near by, where he determined to rest. Worn out by excitement and fatigue he threw himself on the straw, and slept soundly for a couple of hours.

With the earliest streaks of dawn he rose and looked about him. It seemed he was in a manger, which he

had shared with a cow and a calf. 'Ah,' thought he, 'I must get out of this at once, for the cowherd will be coming; but first I will have some breakfast,' and taking his cap for a basin, he milked the cow into it, for he had been brought up on a farm, and was well used to such things. Then, feeling a new man, he continued his journey.

His next resting-place was in a haystack which had been partly cut, and here he took out his map and examined the roads he had come, and those he had still to pass. The sun shone bright and strong and dried and warmed him, but he was rather dismayed to find that he had taken a wrong turning in the dark and gone in exactly the opposite direction to what he had intended. However, he came to the conclusion that he could soon mend that by striking straight east, towards the sea. What troubled him much more than having missed his way was the fact that he was very hungry, and he had only one biscuit left in his pocket.

For two or three hours he walked on, keeping behind hedges and waiting till the few passengers on the roads had passed by. His spirits rose with the feeling that a few hours more would find him on the coast, when his heart stood still with horror. There on a hill, only a few fields in front of him, stood the prison, which he thought he had left behind for ever.

Fortunately for him, it was by this time nearly dark, or some one would surely have noticed the strange creature flying along as if he had wings, till he reached the cowshed beyond the bridge of Oundle. This last shock had exhausted him more than the whole of the previous day, and he had no chance of breakfast any more than supper, for the cow and the calf were no longer there. However, he could still sleep, and sleep he did till morning, when he found that the rain had begun again as hard as ever.

It soon occurred to him that as the hut must belong

to somebody, it was dangerous to lie there unconcealed, so he looked about to see if he could make himself a hiding-place. Yes, he was sure he could manage one, for some hurdles and an old gate were already laid out of the way across the beams in the roof, and he carried up some straw to heap over them. When he had arranged it, he carefully examined it from below, and found to his joy that it really looked as if it had been stacked on purpose. So he swung himself up, and curled himself up out of sight close to a hole in the roof, through which he could perceive the high road and the fields adjoining.

He had been up in his perch for a couple of hours, when he saw three soldiers with fixed bayonets crossing the bridge. They came straight towards the shed, and two of them entered and glanced round, but not imagining that anyone could be hidden in a place which had the door open for all passers-by to look into, they took their departure, but not before they had thrust their bayonets up through the hurdles and straw where the fugitive was lying. As it happened the points never touched him, and *that* danger was over.

After this it seemed best to travel by night and along the banks of a river—if he could find one. So at eleven he set out and reached Peterborough about three. Hungry though he was, he did not dare to stop at any of the inns which he passed on the way, and thankful indeed was the poor wanderer to see the river Nene in front of him, and to sit on a stile to rest. Always proceeding with the greatest caution, that night he arrived fainting with hunger at the town of Wisbeach, which proved much larger than he expected, and in spite of the vessels that gladdened his eyes, the sight of some soldiers warned him to continue his journey as quickly as possible. At length he reached a large village, with canals and fens all round it, and at the end of the



The Soldiers search the Shed for the Prisoner

street, standing apart from the other houses, was a shop. And what was more, a shop with bread and cheese in it.

At that moment the Frenchman would thankfully have given a gold piece for a single slice of the loaf, but though he had plenty of money, he knew quite well that if he were to speak his accent would betray him. He stood hesitating and staring through the window, when there entered a waterman, who sat down in a chair and silently passed his hand over his chin. The shopkeeper seemed to understand, for without asking any questions, he put a cloth over his customer's shoulders, and began to shave him. As soon as he had finished, the waterman put two pence on the counter, and took from the window some herrings and a loaf of bread, which he tied up in his handkerchief. Then holding out four pence in payment, he left the shop.

Delighted at receiving such a good lesson of how to satisfy his pangs, the Frenchman walked boldly in and imitated the waterman in every particular, except that he bought more food and some tobacco and a pipe.

The very fact of having provisions with him seemed to make him feel less hungry, and he soon found a tumbledown shed on the banks of a stream in which he could eat in peace.

The next day, Sunday, he washed his shirt and socks, and rested in the hovel, and, a different man from the worn-out creature of twenty-four hours previous, he set off at nine o'clock for Downham.

Up to this point all had gone well, but on leaving Downham he took a wrong turn, and found himself at the very place he had been warned not to go near—Lynn, in Norfolk.

Now the young Frenchman had been so very lucky in his wanderings ever since he had escaped from prison that he had grown careless, and besides the sight of the sea and the ships had made his longing for France

and freedom almost unbearable. Therefore, instead of going to one of the smaller ports along the coast, he determined to try for a passage from Lynn itself, although he had sense enough still to hide himself in some fields by day, and wait till midnight before he ventured out.

The old fishing town seemed fast asleep, and he walked from end to end without meeting anyone except an old watchman or two.

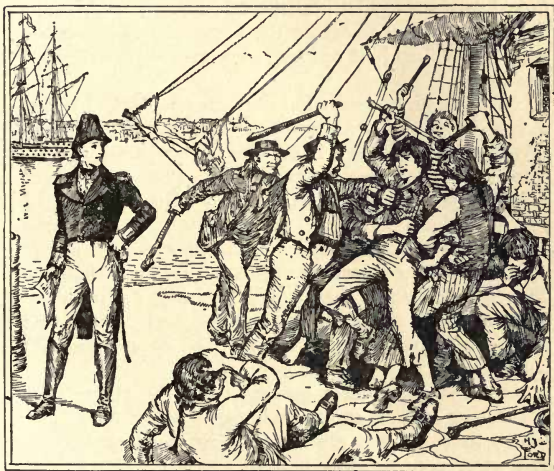
'I need not have been so cautious,' he said to himself; 'to-morrow I will come earlier,' and so he did, and entered the gates about ten o'clock while some of the shops were still open, and sat down on a bench close to the harbour. Here he remained for about an hour, looking at the different boats and wondering which one would suit his purpose. So absorbed was he that he never noticed that the other people had disappeared and he was alone. He was, however, recalled to himself at seeing a band of six or seven sailors armed with sticks, and accompanied by an officer with a sword, pass close to him. They gazed hard at him but did not stop, and the young man dared not stir, lest he should cause them to suspect him. In another minute the men were back again, and the officer, tapping him on the shoulder, signed to him to follow.

The fugitive was so overcome at the downfall of his hopes that his legs seemed incapable of moving. Upon this, the roughest of all the band seized him by the collar and shook him, which so irritated the young man that he struck out with his own stick, and knocked over two of the sailors. But they were seven to one, and he was very soon overpowered by a sharp knock on the back of his head, the officer in command looking on and saying nothing.

In this way they went along two or three streets till they entered, not a gaol as the prisoner expected, but a small inn, where the officer gave one of the men some

orders in a low voice and then left, taking the rest of the band with him. The man in charge took his prisoner into a small room, where for some time they sat silently on each side of the fire.

So they remained for about an hour, when suddenly a loud noise was heard downstairs and the sailor was frequently called by name to help. He rushed out of



the door, locking it quickly after him, and apparently forgetting all about the window, which, though a good height from the ground, was a possible means of escape to anyone used to climbing. The instant the key turned in the lock the prisoner rushed to the window and flung it open, but before he could get out of it he heard his gaoler's footsteps coming up the stairs. Without knowing why, the captive crept under a big oak table with two

large flaps which stood on one side of the room, where he was quite hidden. The key grated in the lock and the sailor came in, but at the sight of the open window he gave a cry of rage, and springing towards it swung himself down below. Then the Frenchman stole swiftly from his hiding-place, and catching sight of the sailor disappearing in the direction of the harbour, jumped down in his turn, and took an opposite road, which he hoped might lead him into the country. What was his dismay when, on rounding the corner, he came on the rest of the band of sailors, who with a shout gave chase.

Tired as he was—for the blow on his head had been a very hard one—he seemed to hear the gates of the prison closing behind him, when he noticed a door close to him standing a little open. It was in a dark part of the street, next to a narrow lane, and he had the good fortune to slip in without their perceiving him, and he held his breath while they dashed madly up the lane. As soon as he felt quite sure that the danger was over for the moment, he sank down on the floor, in front of an old woman who had been sitting by the fire stroking her cat when he had so unexpectedly entered.

She understood in a moment that the young man before her was a stranger imploring her help, and seeing that he was almost fainting from exhaustion and pain, poured some brandy down his throat and placed a pillow under his head.

During the whole of the next day the helpless man lay ill in her house, and as he understood a little English, though he could not speak it, he learned that she also had a son who was a prisoner of war in France, and for his sake would shelter all who sought her protection. As to accepting any of the money he held out, she pushed it indignantly away.

Of course it was quite clear he could not remain

in the little kitchen close to the street, but there was an empty room at the back which no one could see into, and into this the fugitive was moved. In the evenings when all was quiet she would lock her front door, and come and talk to her guest. She was, he found, the widow of a sea captain who had left her with enough to live on comfortably. Her children and grandchildren were all dead except the sailor who was now a prisoner in the town of Verdun. For two years she had had no news of him—but here, with tears in his eyes, the young Frenchman interrupted her, and exclaimed that if ever he got back to France he would never rest till he had obtained her son's freedom.

As soon as the fugitive was able to leave his bed, she gave him some clothes belonging to one of her grandsons, as his own had been torn and spoilt in all his adventures since he had left the prison, and besides, these things were of English make, and would partly serve as a disguise.

At the end of a week he declared he was perfectly well again, and meant to continue his journey. She begged him to run no risks and wait a little longer, but he would listen to nothing, and at last she had to content herself with giving him the best advice she could how to escape detection.

'To-morrow is market day,' she said, 'and if you walk boldly along nobody will heed you, for they will be far too busy with their own concerns. Go straight eastwards, and you will find yourself on the coast road. The place where I think you are sure to get a ship is many miles off, and you will have to spend at least one night on the way. But I will give you food enough to last your whole journey, so that you need never enter a shop.'

'Ah, madame! how good you are!' cried the young man, seizing her hands. 'How can I ever thank you?'

'Send me back my son,' said she, and was silent

for a little. Then she continued : ' At Langham you will catch sight of the sea, and leaving the village behind you keep along the edge of the cliffs for half a mile till you see below you on the beach a handful of cottages, one of which stands by itself and has a boat moored in front of it. Hidden among some bushes is a path that leads downwards, but be careful, for it is very steep, and the sand is loose and slips easily. You can conceal yourself in the bushes till it is dark, and when you notice a candle put in the window of the house that stands alone, and has three oyster-shells over the door, come out and knock. You can trust yourself safely to the man who is within.'

With a sad and grateful heart he bade farewell to the kindest of friends, whom he never saw again, and at eight o'clock in the morning the escaped prisoner was already on his way. He followed carefully the directions which had been given him, and at dusk on the second evening entered the house with the three oyster-shells—a sign, he had been told, that the master was at home.

Inside a man dressed like a sailor and wearing a cap made of hair was sitting at a small table smoking a pipe and drinking a glass of grog. A scar ran across his forehead, and he wore a silver ring on his thumb ; but at the entrance of his visitor he took the pipe from his mouth and stared hard at the intruder.

The Frenchman, who had been warned by the old woman what to do, made a sign over his head with two fingers of his left hand, which was at once replied to by the other, who told the young man in French to come in and have some supper, and that he would see to the rest.

The fugitive did not need to be informed that his host was a smuggler, and that the good brandy he so

badly needed in his exhausted state had never paid duty to King George.

That night—with several others after—was spent by the Frenchman in a strange hiding-place with a tiny hole in the wall, through which he could see everyone that approached the house. Inside his door was a strong iron bar, which the smuggler desired him never to move unless a certain password was given, and he was further warned not to leave the house on any pretext whatever.

The days that followed were very dreary to the captive. He was always in the dark, so could neither read nor do any work with his hands, which had whiled away some of the long hours in prison. His host was busy with his own affairs, and it was only when the rest of the village was asleep that he invited the captive into another room, when the smuggler sought to cheer him up with stories of hairbreadth escapes from the Revenue men.

At last, when the Frenchman had almost given up hope, he saw from his peephole a boat with two men and a boy approaching the shore, and knew the boy to be the son of the smuggler. As he was gazing the smuggler himself tapped him on the shoulder. 'Come, quick,' he said, and without a word more the Frenchman was hurried into the boat, and the two men pulled with all their might till, after two hours, they reached a small Dutch vessel which was waiting for them. 'Quick,' said the smuggler again, and hoisted his passenger up on deck; then, waving their caps, he and his son picked up their oars and pushed off.

In two days the French prisoner was on the soil of France, free!

WHAT BECAME OF OLD MR. HARRISON?

IN the northern part of the county of Gloucester there is a range of hills called the Cotswolds, and scattered about them are beautiful ancient towns and manor houses, often 300 or 400 years old, built of a kind of soft yellow stone easily carved into curious shapes. In Chipping Campden, one of the smallest of these towns—so small, indeed, that it only had a single street—very strange things happened in the years of Cromwell's death and Charles II.'s restoration, and to this day no one has ever been able to find out the exact truth about them. The great family of the neighbourhood was the Campdens, and when news reached the Cotswolds that Cromwell's soldiers were marching that way, Lord Campden set fire to his own house lest it should afford shelter to the rebels. In 1659, when this story opens, the Cotswolds were quiet again, but Lady Campden did not attempt to rebuild the old manor, and lived in another house in the village, leaving her agent Harrison and his family to make themselves as comfortable as they could in a few rooms of the old house which the fire had spared.

The Campdens were Royalists, but the Harrisons, faithful servants though they were, were Puritans by religion, and attended regularly the services or 'lectures' conducted by the Puritan ministers in the parish church. On their return from one of these lectures at noon on a market day in 1659, they noticed

with surprise that some iron bars of a window on the second floor were missing, and the stone in which they were fixed was broken. As the windows were high above the ground, it was plain that the person who had done this must have entered by the help of a ladder, and old Harrison's heart sank at the sight, for this was the room in which he put away Lady Campden's rents as soon as he had collected them. He hastily unlocked the front door, and ran upstairs. Yes, what he feared had come to pass, and £140 belonging to Lady Campden had been stolen, and in those days this was a much larger sum of money than it is now. He made, of course, a great hue and cry, but though in general the villagers were quick to note—and to suspect—any stranger who appeared among them, nobody had seen or heard anything out of the common, and Harrison was forced to let the matter rest and make his peace with Lady Campden as best he could.

So the weeks passed on, and the robbery was almost forgotten, when one day a man called John Perry, who did odd jobs for the Harrisons, was heard shrieking for help in the garden. Everyone came running to his aid, and when he could speak, it was an odd story that he told. He had been attacked, he declared, by two men dressed in white with naked swords in their hands, but had managed to beat them off, though he had only a spud to defend himself with; and he held up the handle, all dented and scarred, to show how fierce had been the fight.

The Harrisons heard this with astonishment, as well they might. Again inquiries were made, but though one would have thought that men in white were an uncommon sight, and that *someone* must have remarked them, they had vanished as utterly as if they had sprung from the earth to attack John Perry, and then sunk into it.

More than half of the year 1660 had passed away, and no men, white or black, had assaulted any more of the inhabitants of Chipping Campden. On August 16 Mr. Harrison told his wife that he must go to the village of Charringworth and collect some rents that were then due, though the date was not a usual date for gathering rents. The day wore away, and as evening drew near old Mrs. Harrison grew very anxious. Charringworth was only two miles from Campden, and her husband ought to have been back hours ago. When eight o'clock came, and there was still no sign of him, she could bear it no longer, and bade John Perry go to Charringworth, and see what had happened. He could take his lantern; that would give him light enough to make out the road.

All night long the poor lady sat up, having placed candles in Harrison's window to cheer him as he walked homewards, but dawn approached and both Harrison and Perry were still absent. Then she roused her son Edward, who did not share his mother's alarm, or he would not have lain in bed so quietly. However, he jumped up at once, and dressing by the rays of the moon, set off to Charringworth.

Edward had scarcely gone beyond Campden, when he met Perry, who declared he could get no tidings of his master. But his search could not have been very keen, for when Edward, who insisted that Perry should accompany him, reached another little village not a mile from Campden, he found that his father had stopped there on his way home, in the house of a man called Daniel. Starting from this clue, he inquired further, and next learned that a woman had picked up in a clump of furze bushes nearer still to Campden a hat, a comb, all cut and broken, and a neckband with blood on it.

At this news all the people both in Elrington and Campden took for granted that Harrison was dead, and

at once began to look for his body in every possible and impossible place. But, seek as they would, no body could be found, and there was not even a trace of blood or a sign of struggle, either on the road or on the grass. Then it was whispered, none could say by whom, that John Perry knew more about old Harrison's disappearance than he chose to tell, and the following morning John was summoned before the Justice of the Peace, Sir Thomas Overbury, to give an account of his doings on the night of August 16, and this was his tale.

At Mrs. Harrison's bidding he had left Campden House the evening before, about a quarter to nine, but hardly had he started when he felt frightened at being alone and in the dark, and meeting a man he knew named William Reed, walking the opposite way, he stopped and talked to him, and explained that he was going back to get Mr. Edward's horse, so that he might finish his errand the quicker. The two men went a few steps together, and, as Reed afterwards swore, parted at Harrison's gate. Instead of getting the horse, Perry stayed where he was, within call of the house, till another friend, Pierce, passed by, and with him Perry summoned up courage to go as far as the fields, returning, however, to his post at the gate. By this time he was feeling rather chilly, so he sat for an hour in the hen-house, waiting for the moon to rise, which it did at midnight. He then started for Charringworth, but as a mist came up, which hid the moon, he quietly lay down under a hedge and went to sleep. At dawn he awoke, and at length reached the village, two miles from home, for which he had set out eight hours earlier.

Here he learned nothing, except that no one had seen old Harrison there on the previous day; but most likely he did not waste much time in the search, and on his way back he met, as has been said, with Edward Harrison.

We do not know what the missing man's wife and son thought of this amazing story. Probably they did not believe a word of it, but Sir Thomas Overbury ordered Perry to be kept under lock and key in the inn for a week, while inquiries were made. To everybody's surprise, however, Reed and Pierce and two Charringworth men, all stated that what he had said of them was true, and perhaps this encouraged Perry, for his tales grew more and more marvellous, and often differed strangely from each other. At one time he declared that Harrison had been murdered by a tinker, and his body hidden in a stack of beans. Men were instantly sent to search the stack, but no body was there. Next he insisted on seeing Sir Thomas Overbury, as he would confess to him and to no one else; and when he was brought into his presence, he vowed that Harrison had been murdered by himself, his mother and his brother, and further that the robbery of the year before had been planned by him and carried out by his brother Richard, who had buried the stolen money in the garden. But no money was found in the spot he indicated. Then, in order to have nothing left on his mind, he ended by saying that there was not a word of truth in the story of the men in white who had attacked him.

Having once begun to talk about himself, Perry found the subject so fascinating that he could not stop, and, what was worse, in these new stories he made his brother and mother play an important part. It was *they*, he said, who were always asking him when the rents were to be collected, and, forgetting all about Pierce and Reed, he now told the magistrate that he and Richard had followed Harrison home on the night of August 16; that Richard, in the presence of his mother, had knocked the old man down and then strangled him, John apparently looking on; that *they* took his money, and meant, when John himself left

them, to throw the body into the great sink by the mill. But the body was not in the sink, any more than it was in the bean stack, and though Perry allowed that he had carried away the hat, comb and neckband, and thrown them into the furze bush where they were found, he did not explain why, as Harrison was strangled, there should have been any blood on the neckband.

At this point Joan Perry and her son Richard were arrested, and with John committed for trial on the ground that they had robbed old Harrison as well as murdered him. There was no proof excepting John Perry's own confession that they had ever been concerned in one or the other crimes, and if *they* were guilty so was he. Unluckily Richard and his mother were advised by some foolish friend to confess to the robbery, thinking themselves sure of pardon under a law just passed by Charles II., but the murder charge was proceeded with, though the first judge threw it out, declaring that till Harrison's body was discovered there was no certainty of his death. For what reason we do not know, the case stood over for six months, when another judge was sitting, and he seems to have considered the bad reputation of the Perry family as sufficient evidence for something being wrong. No one had seen either the robbery or the murder, but plenty of people came forward to swear that the old mother, Joan, was a witch, and had worked much evil in the village, and John and Richard were her sons, and therefore must be as bad as she was. So they were all sentenced to be hung, and hung they were, John declaring at the last that he knew nothing of his master's death, nor where he was, but this they might perhaps learn hereafter.

This is the end of the first part of the story, and one cannot help suspecting that when John began these wonderful tales he did not foresee that they would

lead him straight to the gallows, though he may have been quite willing, or even anxious, that his mother and brother should go there.

HARRISON'S REAPPEARANCE

It was two or three years after the hanging of the Perrys that old Harrison came back to Campden, where his son had taken his place as Lady Campden's agent. Great was the surprise of all at the sight of the man whom they had universally believed to be dead, on the bare word of a lunatic given to behold visions. Everyone was eager to hear his tale, but when he told it, it was to the full as marvellous as any nursery story of robbers and giants or even as the inventions of Perry himself.

He was returning home, he said, along the road between Charringworth and Campden on the night of August 16, 1660, having in his pocket 23*l.*, the rent of one Edward Plaisterer. Dusk was falling, for he had been kept in Charringworth later than he intended, when suddenly out of the furze bushes by the roadside there appeared before him a horseman who cried, 'Art thou there?' Harrison, startled and frightened, hit the horse on the nose with his fist, and then the horseman drew his sword and stabbed him in the side. In a moment the rider was joined by two other mounted companions, one of whom gave Harrison a dig with a sword in the thigh, while a second dragged him up behind his saddle and put handcuffs on his hands and a great cloak over his shoulders.

The hat and comb, which, we know, had been found among the furze bushes, might easily have fallen off in the struggle, but the neckband required to be carefully unfastened, and Harrison says nothing of any wound about his face that would account for the blood on it.



How Mr Harrison was attacked by the strange Horsemen.



Well, this strange party rode on for some distance, and 'tumbled' the old man into a stonepit, first taking away his 23*l*. Here he was left for an hour, when he was dragged out again, wounded afresh, and—perhaps to make amends—had a 'great quantity of money stuffed into his pockets.'

All the next day they pursued their way, and at evening stopped at a lonely house, where somehow or other they managed to get both broth and brandy, with which they fed their bleeding captive. On Sunday about three they arrived at Deal—their horses must have been astonishingly swift to have covered the distance in three days—and laid Harrison on the ground, where one of the men stood over him. The other two meanwhile held a conversation with a man who had suddenly made his appearance, and though Harrison was too far off to hear all they said, he caught the words 'seven pounds' and a glance at himself, followed by the remark that he would probably die before he was got on board a ship.

In this, it chanced, he was mistaken, as Harrison declares that he stayed on that vessel with several other prisoners for six weeks, during which time they seem to have sailed about the Mediterranean, for at length they encountered three Turkish ships who attacked and captured them. The fellow-prisoners appear to have been sold as slaves in the city of Smyrna, while Harrison became the property of a Turkish physician, who had travelled much in England, and thought that there was no place like the old Fen town of Crowland in Lincolnshire. Perhaps it was his affection for England which induced him to buy Harrison, or 'Boll,' as he called him, for a man of seventy is not likely to be a very useful slave. However, seventy may have been considered quite youthful by an old gentleman of eighty-seven, which was the age of the Turk, who in spite of his years one day knocked 'Boll' flat

with a blow of his fist, and then gave him a silver drinking-bowl to make it up.

Nearly two years passed in this manner, when suddenly the Turk died, and Harrison, with his bowl in his pocket for passage money, went on board a vessel bound for Hamburg, but was faithlessly put on shore at Lisbon. Here he was lucky enough to meet with an Englishman, who took pity on his forlorn condition and sent him back to Dover. How he came from there to Campden he does not say.

It would be very interesting to know how many people in Harrison's native place believed this wonderful tale. In those times so little was really known of what happened in the world outside the village that in some ways it was easy enough for the greatest marvels to be accepted without question. Yet those there were who thought that young Harrison, who had an ill name, had arranged to have his father kidnapped and hidden away. But even so, we should like to hear how it was managed so near his own home, and where he was kept for so long, and that is a point which no one has found out yet. Only, we are certain of two things: one, that the Perrys did not murder him, as he was alive; and the other, that wherever he may have spent the two years of his absence, it was not in Turkey.

AUNT MARGARET'S MIRROR

WHEN Sir Walter Scott was a little boy he used often to spend whole days, or sometimes whole weeks, with his old Aunt Margaret, who lived in a little house near Edinburgh, full of latticed windows, no two of them exactly alike. At first some of his many brothers and sisters went with him, but as the years passed on the girls died and the boys sailed away across the seas, till at length no one was left but the lame Walter to knock at the honeysuckle porch.

What a long time it was since his earliest knock at that door, thought Sir Walter to himself one day when he was fifty-six, and a great man in the eyes of everybody but himself. *His* hair was white now, instead of flaxen, but, though other people might change, Aunt Margaret looked exactly as she did when he had to be lifted over the stile on the way to her house. Her brown silk gown might have been the very one she had worn then, its fashion was so precisely similar ; her hair was no whiter now than it was—or seemed to be—as long as he could recollect, and she still sat at her wheel by the fire in winter and by the window in summer. When Sir Walter was worried by family cares or distressed by some misfortune that he could not help, it was a rest to come and spend an evening with Aunt Margaret, who never appeared to have any troubles at all. Certainly, if she had, she kept them to herself, and did not share them with her visitors.

'They have been clearing out the old chapel,' she said to him one summer evening; 'they brought me a stone which bears the name of my kinswoman Margaret Bothwell. I bade them lay it aside, as it may shortly serve for me, in spite of the date, which is 1585.'

'You are really getting superstitious, I do believe,' answered Sir Walter, with a smile.

'Perhaps I am more superstitious than you know,' replied Aunt Margaret; 'at any rate, there are some stories that I never could hear without shuddering a little. Not *too* much, but just enough to make me hesitate to look over my shoulder at the most thrilling part, and reluctant to glance at my mirror when I am alone. Or even when I am *not*, the sight of a large blank mirror in a room which is only spotted with candles gives me a feeling that something may be reflected there I would rather not see. Then I send my maid to draw the curtains across, so that she may get the first shock.'

'So *that* is the reason of those curtains. I have often wondered,' exclaimed Sir Walter.

'Yes, and it is possible I should not have had these fancies if it had not been for a story told me by my grandmother, Lady Bothwell, when I was a child. It happened to her.'

'I wish you would tell it to *me*,' said Sir Walter. 'Nobody has such good stories as you.'

'Listen, then,' and Aunt Margaret began: 'In the days of Queen Anne no man was more famous for the duels he had fought than Sir Philip Forester. He was lively and clever and very handsome, and the greatest ladies spoiled him to his heart's content, and were put in a good temper for the whole day did he but bow to them as they passed in the Mall. Of course report constantly went that he was about to be married to this lady or that, but in spite of it all Sir Philip still remained a bachelor. Then it was announced that he had made his choice at last, and that the fortunate woman who

was about to become Lady Forester was Miss Jemima Falconer, sister to my grandmother, Lady Bothwell, and possessed like her of ten thousand pounds.

Unluckily for her, however, she was not possessed of Lady Bothwell's good sense, and though she was devoted to her husband he soon got tired of her foolishness and snatched at any excuse to leave her and the children. He was a very selfish man and terribly extravagant, and in a few years all Lady Forester's money was spent, and Sir Philip declared that he should go abroad and fight under Marlborough. On hearing this poor Lady Forester became crazy with terror lest he should be killed, but though her husband did his best to soothe her he would not give up his plan. At length the question was settled by Lady Bothwell inviting her sister and the children to stay with her till Sir Philip returned.

So away he went, and a single letter saying that he had landed was all they ever had from him, though his sister-in-law was almost as glad as his wife at a notice they saw in one of the tiny newspapers of the day, stating that he had distinguished himself in some dangerous work. Lady Forester tried to make excuses for him to her sister, who she was aware secretly blamed him for his heartlessness.

'He is always so careless, you know,' she would say, 'and, like all men, he never will write a letter if he can possibly help it'; or, 'Of course he would tell us if anything dreadful had happened; but he would feel that if we did not hear we should be sure that everything was going smoothly.'

Except for repeating these consolations, which she did not really believe, Lady Forester became more and more silent. Lady Bothwell watched her with growing fears, but nothing she could do would rouse her from her melancholy. The children, poor little things, were glad enough to escape from her side and go

to their more lively aunt, who had always something nice for them to do : for the boys fishing or haymaking, for the girls gathering fruit for preserves or the seeking of herbs in the woods for medicine or ointments.

Suddenly an event happened which startled the deserted wife from the stupor into which she had fallen.

There appeared in Edinburgh, which was only a short distance from Lady Bothwell's house, a man who was so different in all ways from the rest of the inhabitants that he attracted the attention of everyone. Nobody knew anything about him, but people lowered their voices when they spoke of him—they could not have told you why—and whispered strange tales to each other. He was a learned doctor, they said, from the Italian University of Padua, and had cured diseases which the best physicians in Edinburgh had declared hopeless. The ministers preached against him, and pronounced him a dealer in magic and no better than a wizard ; but, in spite of their sermons, both men and women flocked to his dwelling, only they went by night instead of by day, and wore large cloaks and shawls to disguise themselves.

At first Doctor Damiotti—for so he was called—was only consulted about aches and pains, but gradually it began to be rumoured that if you paid him well enough he would tell you what was happening to persons at a distance. This report reached Lady Forester, who at once announced to her sister that she intended to pay a visit to the man, and find out what had befallen her husband. Lady Bothwell tried in vain to stop her. Lady Forester would listen to nothing. ' I will go this very evening,' was all she answered, ' and learn my fate.'

' Then I will go with you,' said Lady Bothwell.

It was nearly dark when the two sisters, dressed like working women, with their plaids drawn closely round their heads, knocked at the door of the doctor's house.

They were accompanied by an old servant bearing a torch, who served as their guide, for neither of the ladies was acquainted with the narrow 'wynds' off the Canon-gate. The door was thrown back, apparently by unseen hands, and they crossed a small hall and entered a room which was dimly lighted.

As they came in a handsome man, dressed, as all doctors then were, in black, rose from the table and signed to them to sit down.

'We are poor people, sir,' began Lady Bothwell, trying to play her part; but the doctor stopped her with a smile.

'I am aware,' he said, 'that Lady Bothwell and Lady Forester have honoured me with a visit, and also that Lady Forester is in great distress. Oh, do not be afraid,' he continued hastily, 'it is not your servant who has betrayed you.'

Lady Bothwell was surprised, though she tried not to show it.

'Then, sir, if you know who we are, you also know on what errand we have come.'

'You desire to learn the fate of Sir Philip Forester, now on the Continent, and husband to this lady,' answered he.

Lady Bothwell bowed her head.

'Have you the power to relieve my sister's anxiety?' she asked.

'I have, madam. But have you the courage to see with your own eyes what Sir Philip is doing at this moment, or would you rather hear it from me?'

'I can bear to see whatever you can show me,' said Lady Forester, speaking for the first time.

'There may be danger in it,' observed the doctor.

'If money can do anything,' and as she spoke Lady Forester drew out her purse, but the doctor waved it aside.

'Your fee is paid already, madam,' he replied, 'and

I cannot accept more ; but once again I ask you if you are sure you have courage to bear what I may have to show you.'

'I confess to feeling some fear,' answered Lady Bothwell, 'but as my sister is anxious to see with her own eyes I will see with her.'

'Very well,' said the doctor. 'For seven minutes the picture will last, that is if you can remain steadily silent during that time. For I warn you that if you utter a single word the charm will be broken, and some danger to the spectators may be the result.'

With that he bowed and left the room, saying that he must make some preparations.

During his absence the two sisters sat hand in hand without speaking, and, curiously enough, it was Lady Forester who was the calmer of the two.

Neither could have told how long they sat there, but at length the silence was broken by the sound of music, played on some instrument which they did not know. When it ceased a door opened at the further end of the room, and Damiotti entered wearing a dress quite unlike any they had ever seen before. Sandals were on his bare feet ; short breeches clothed his legs down to the knee, while over a tunic of crimson silk flowed a white linen garment. His face was deadly pale, and his expression that of a man who was about to undergo a painful operation. Without speaking, he signed to the ladies to follow him, and led the way into the next room. The sight that met their eyes was certainly startling—at least, as much as they could see of it. Black hangings covered the wall, and were thrown over a kind of altar at the upper end. In front of this altar was a platform raised above the rest of the floor by two or three broad steps, and on each side were five unlit torches. Filled with awe, the two sisters obeyed his signal, and ascended the steps behind him. He then held out his forefinger in turn to each of the

torches, which instantly took fire. By their light the ladies beheld two naked swords crossed on the altar, and an open book in strange writing, with a human skull beside it, while on the wall behind hung a very large mirror in which these things were reflected.



The Magic Mirror

The doctor pointed silently to the mirror, and then slipped between the two ladies, holding their hands. The eyes of all three were riveted on the mirror, and gradually the sisters noticed, with a feeling of sinking fear, that the reflection of the objects on the altar gradually faded away, and that others *which were not*

there began to appear within it. At first it was difficult to distinguish exactly what they were, for their outlines and shapes were blurred and indistinct, but little by little the images grew clearer, and at length the aisles and arches of a church stood before them. On the pillars were coats of arms, while, judging from the inscriptions, many people lay buried under the floor. A clergyman in a black gown and bands, with a clerk behind him, stood waiting at the side of a bare altar, on which lay a Bible. Evidently it was a Protestant church, and probably a foreign one.

The clergyman moved a step forward, and the spectators beheld a number of people, beautifully dressed, walking up the middle aisle. At their head a tall, elegant man was giving his hand to a girl, who, as far as could be seen, was not more than sixteen. Bride and bridegroom clearly, thought the ladies, but—what had all this to do with them? Yet surely there was something familiar in the bridegroom's walk and his manner of holding himself. At this instant he turned his face: it was Sir Philip Forester.

The forsaken wife gave a gasp, for it was hardly a cry, and at once the surface of the mirror became cloudy and agitated, as a pool does when you throw a stone in it. But the pressure of the doctor's grasp caused Lady Forester to recover her self-control, and in the mirror the mist dispersed and the figures became as plain as ever. The procession advanced up the aisle, and the bride and bridegroom were standing in front of the altar, when another group strolled carelessly into the church. They appeared to intend to join the bridal party, when suddenly one of them, an officer, hastened rapidly forward, drawing his sword from its sheath. The bridegroom turned, and becoming very pale, unsheathed his own. This was the signal for a general disturbance, which the clergyman tried in vain to quiet. But at this point the picture was again

blurred, and soon nothing remained except the smooth dark mirror and the reflection of the objects on the altar.

Both ladies were by this time hardly able to stand, and the doctor half dragged them back to the next room, where they sank on chairs. They were too much moved to speak, but Lady Forester's face wore a strange look, as if she were still under the spell of the picture.

The silence was at last broken by Lady Bothwell.

'Is the scene which we have witnessed taking place at this moment?' asked she.

'That I cannot tell you,' answered Damiotti, 'but it is either now being acted or has taken place only a short time ago.'

'I must get my sister home at once,' said Lady Bothwell, looking at her anxiously; 'have you a messenger you could send to fetch a chair or a coach?'

'That is arranged already,' replied he. 'Your servant has your carriage waiting at the end of the street. But you need feel no anxiety about your sister; give her this soothing draught when she is in bed, and to-morrow she will be very much better. Few persons,' he added, 'leave this house as well as they entered it. Farewell, madam.'

But in spite of the doctor's draught, Lady Forester grew worse and worse. The strain she had undergone for so many months had reduced her nerves to such a state of weakness that they were unable to bear the shock of the vision. Her mind was already almost gone when the arrival of news from Holland upset it altogether.

It came from the British Ambassador to France, and informed Lady Bothwell and her sister that Sir Philip Forester had fought a duel with Captain Falconer, the brother of the two ladies, in which Falconer

had been killed. Sir Philip, it appeared, had lost a great deal of money in gambling while he was with the army, and one day had vanished, no one knew where. As he had changed his name, it was not easy to trace him, and it was only now discovered that he had gone to live in Rotterdam, where he had made friends with a rich old citizen, who had a young and beautiful daughter. The old man readily accepted his new acquaintance's proposals for the young lady's hand, and very imprudently asked no questions of anyone. The wedding day arrived, and it happened that Captain Falconer, who was stationed at Rotterdam, was invited by a Dutch gentleman with whom he was staying to join the party in the church. It was only when there that he discovered that the bridegroom was his own brother-in-law, and, rushing forward, proclaimed that he was already a married man. Of course Forester at once challenged him, and in the duel that was fought next day Falconer lost his life.

'And did all this happen exactly at the moment when the ladies were looking on?' asked Sir Walter, as Aunt Margaret paused.

'No,' answered she, 'I can't honestly say it did, but it took place a few days earlier, exactly as it was represented. Of course Damiotti might have known the facts; that is quite possible; but then, how did he show them in the mirror?'

Shortened from 'Aunt Margaret's Mirror.'

THE PRISONER OF THE CHÂTEAU D'IF

EDMOND DANTÈS had been arrested at his wedding feast, held in a little village near Marseilles, for plotting the return of Napoleon from Elba. He was a young sailor, not yet nineteen, but in his voyages up and down the Mediterranean he had shown such knowledge of the coasts and such skill in avoiding dangerous rocks and in steering his ship through violent tempests, that the owners of the *Pharaoh* had resolved to make him captain when the vessel set out on her next voyage. Then suddenly, just at the moment when he seemed to have nothing to wish for, this terrible blow fell ; he was thrown into one of the strongest prisons in France, and the gaoler was given strict orders to allow him to speak to nobody.

For six years Dantès had remained in his cell, with nothing to mark the time but the two daily visits made by the turnkey, always at the same hour. His little window was so high up in the wall that he could not even get a glimpse of his beloved sea—for the Château d'If hung over the Mediterranean—and it was only for a few hours that the cell was really light. He had nothing to do, and only the past to think of : for he dared not let his mind dwell on the long chain of years to come when he must die of old age, lest he should go mad at the prospect. If he had only had a companion Dantès felt he could have borne his captivity, but the sentence of the judge was, 'to be strictly guarded

and kept apart,' so there was no hope of that. And after all, what had he done? Carried a packet, of whose contents he was ignorant, to the Grand Marshal, and received a letter from him addressed to one Monsieur Noirtier, of whom he knew nothing. Was that a crime for which to condemn a man to solitary confinement for life?

For a long while he tried to find comfort in the thought that his imprisonment was owing to some horrible mistake, and soon the wrong would be righted. The letter that accused him of treason to King Louis XVIII. at the end of February 1815 must surely have been intended to apply to some other person. He, Edmond Dantès, was much too humble a being to merit such vengeance, and to-morrow a messenger would certainly come to the prison, and his door would be unlocked, and he would be free—free to go back to the sea and to his love, Mercedes. But many to-morrows passed, and no message came.

At last he gave up hope, and he thought that sooner than grow old and mad in that awful silence he would die. It was easy enough; he had only not to eat the coarse food that his gaoler brought him morning and evening, and in a little while he would be out of their reach. So twice a day he swung himself up to his little window and threw his breakfast and dinner outside to the birds, at first gladly, then gravely, at length with regret. But by-and-by there came a day when he had no strength left even to do this, and the following morning he was so weak that he could hardly open his eyes, and when the gaoler spoke to him the words sounded a long way off and he did not trouble to answer. The man became anxious as he looked at him, and he resolved that if his prisoner was not better by the evening the doctor must be sent for.

All that day Dantès lay quietly on his bed, feeling

almost happy. His hunger had quite passed away, and he was no longer thirsty, while through his half-closed eyelids bright lights seemed to dance and brilliant visions floated before him.

Suddenly his spirit was called back from the borders of death by a noise coming from behind the wall where his bed was placed. He raised his head, feeble as he was, and listened intently. Yes, there was no doubt ; it was a sort of regular scratching such as proceeds from an instrument, and not at all like the sound made by the rats which infested the prison.

For three hours he listened, and then something appeared to roll down, after which there was silence for a time. But when it began afresh it sounded nearer than before, and went on till it was time for the gaoler's morning visit.

'I've brought you a breakfast fit for a king,' said the man, who at bottom was not a bad fellow. And he set down a basin of some good soup and some white bread, and left the cell.

Ah, how nice they looked ! And now Edmond felt he might really eat them, for was he not going to have a companion, and might not the companion help him to get free ? So he ate his breakfast, and by the aid of that and of hope felt himself a new man.

The noise continued and drew nearer and nearer, and at length Edmond determined to answer. If, he said to himself, it should be a workman doing repairs he will stop for a minute, and then go on again ; but if it is a prisoner, he will be frightened and will stop altogether, till he thinks everyone is asleep. With that, he knocked thrice on the wall, and the noise suddenly ceased. For three days the silence lasted, and Edmond's first joy on being assured that it was a fellow-captive who was hollowing out a passage had passed into fear lest the work had been discovered. Still, the new hope born in him had already done him

good. It had awakened in him the knowledge that if he was ever to leave his prison he must harden his body and brace his muscles, which had grown weak



DANTÈS COVETS THE SAUCEPAN

after six years of idleness. So he paced his cell so many times a day till he had walked as much as eight or ten miles, and raised himself up and down from the bars

of his window, so as to strengthen his arms. And even at the end of three days he felt there was a difference.

On the third evening, after the gaoler had paid his last visit, Dantès for the hundredth time placed his ear against the wall, and at length he was almost sure he heard a faint movement coming from behind his bed. Wild with joy, he pushed aside the rough bedstead and looked about for something with which he, on his side, could attack the wall, and do his part in the work of deliverance. But, look as he might, there was nothing that seemed as if it could be of any use. Just a table and chair, a pail and a pitcher; that was all; yet perhaps if he were to break the pitcher the sharp edges of some of the pieces might scrape away the plaster of the wall. At any rate it was worth trying, and flinging the pitcher on the stone floor it crashed into fragments. All night long he scratched and scraped, and certainly by degrees a small heap of plaster lay before him; then he reached a hard substance, against which the bit of broken pottery made no impression. It was too dark for him to see what it was, so he pulled his bed back into its usual place and lay down on it, listening to the workman who was labouring away on the other side.

‘I have had an accident,’ he said to the gaoler when breakfast was brought him. ‘Last night in the dark I knocked over my pitcher.’

‘Well, you must learn to be more careful,’ grumbled the man, going out to fetch another. ‘The State has something else to do with its money besides buying pitchers for prisoners.’

‘Yes, it was very careless of me,’ answered Dantès humbly, as the door was locked.

The instant he was alone he began again, and as there had been heavy rains during the night the plaster had grown damp and was easier to scrape away. In

half an hour he had bored a small opening, and his spirits rose. What might he not have done at this rate in the six years of his imprisonment, if only he had not given up hope so soon ?

At the end of three days he had scraped away all the cement, and had touched the naked stone. But how was he to move this ? The broken bits of pottery were useless, and after an hour's hard work Dantès was forced to give it up, while a rush of despair came over him.

Suddenly a smile broke over his face. He had an idea.

Since the gaoler had found him a few days before in a dying condition, he had brought him soup every day in a little saucepan with an iron handle. Now, if he could get possession of this iron handle, he might be able to lift the stone.

The first thing was to arrange so that the gaoler should leave him the saucepan, which contained enough soup for another sick prisoner as well as himself. That evening when the man came in he poured Dantès' portion into an earthenware plate, and as soon as he had quitted the cell the prisoner ate up his soup with the wooden spoon, and then put the plate on the floor just where the gaoler would be sure to walk on it in the darkness of the early morning. And this is exactly what happened, and again Dantès got a good scolding for his stupidity.

'Well, leave me the saucepan, I can't break *that*,' said Dantès, who saw that the other had had his share ; 'you can take it away in the morning when you bring my breakfast.'

'Yes, that will be the best,' answered the gaoler, setting the saucepan on the table, and glad to save himself the trouble of another journey to the kitchen.

Dantès ate his soup with a better appetite than he had ever eaten anything. Then he went back to his hole, and inserted the iron handle under the stone.

By-and-by he began to feel a slight shake, and at the end of an hour was able to lift the stone from its place, leaving a hole a foot and a half wide behind it. The plaster he crumbled very fine into dust and strewed in a dark corner of his cell, where no one was ever likely to find it.

At dawn he put the stone back into its hole, moved the bed into its proper place, and lay down in it, glad enough to rest, for the work and excitement of so many hours had caused every bone in his body to ache.

'You have not brought me another plate?' he asked the gaoler, when the key turned in the lock.

'No, you break everything; you can keep the iron saucepan, and I will pour your soup into that'; and he went away.

Daily the work went on, and the hole grew deeper and deeper; but strangely enough there was no sound from the opposite direction. Still he continued, hardly pausing even for sleep, till at length the handle of the saucepan struck against an iron bar, passing across the hole and stopping it completely.

At this Edmond's courage gave way, and, regardless of the danger, he broke into a loud cry:

'O God, have pity on me! Have pity, lest I die of despair!'

'Who talks of God and of despair in the same breath?' said a voice which seemed to come from the earth, and at the sound Edmond's hair stood up and he fell on his knees.

'Who are you?' he exclaimed as soon as he could utter; 'speak once more, I beseech you.'

'Who are *you*?' asked the voice, 'and how long have you been here?'

'Since February 28, 1815, when they told me I had conspired to bring about the return of the Emperor. But it was not true. As to my name, it is Edmond Dantès, and I am a sailor.'

'The *return* of the Emperor, did you say?' repeated the other; 'but is not the Emperor still on the throne?'

'No; he abdicated in 1814, and was sent to the island of Elba. But how long have you been a prisoner that you did not know that?'

'Since 1811,' replied the voice, and there was silence for a little.

'Don't dig any further,' said the stranger at last, 'but tell me, how high is your hole?'

'It is close to the ground behind my bed,' replied Dantès.

'What does your cell open on?'

'On a corridor.'

'And the corridor?'

'On the courtyard.'

'Alas! alas!' cried the voice.

'What is the matter?'

'I have made a mistake,' answered the stranger, and I fancied that the wall at which you were digging was the outside wall of the prison, right over the sea.'

'And suppose you had been right?'

'I should have jumped into the water and have swum to one of the small deserted islands that lie in the group off the coast. But now—I must think of a new plan.'

'When will you have one ready?' asked the young man eagerly.

'To-morrow, perhaps; at any rate I will see you. Ah, what happiness it is to feel one has a friend again!'

'Yes! yes!' murmured Dantès.

The rest of the day Dantès spent in walking feverishly about his cell, feeling as if he were a prisoner no longer. Indeed, when in the evening the gaoler came to visit him, and found him stretched on his bed (where he had hastily thrown himself), his eyes bright and his cheeks flushed, the man felt uneasy.

'You look very strange; are you going mad again?'

he asked, but Dantès only shook his head. He dared not trust himself to reply, lest his voice should betray him.

The gaoler had paid his morning visit and gone, when Dantès heard the sound of three knocks on the wall.

'Is it you?' he asked, falling on his knees in front of the wall.

'Has your gaoler called?' inquired the voice.

'Yes, he has just gone, and will not return till the evening.'

'Then I will come in,' and immediately a shower of stones and dust fell into the cell, close to the hole which Dantès himself had made, and a man slowly pushed his way out.

This companion, so ardently longed for by Dantès, was short, with a wrinkled face and a black beard, while his long thick hair was snow white. He seemed pleased and touched by the young man's warm greeting, but soon began to look about, and to show Dantès how to conceal the mouth of the hole, if their meetings were to continue.

'This stone you have here was very clumsily removed,' he said. 'Had you no proper tools?'

'Tools!' echoed Dantès, 'no, is it likely? Have you?'

'Excepting a file I have all I need—chisel, pincers, crowbar.'

'Oh, do let me see them!'

'Here is the chisel,' answered the old man. 'I made it out of the pins of my bedstead, and with this I tunnelled through the fifty feet between your cell and mine.'

'Fifty feet!' cried Dantès.

'Hush! do not speak so loud; someone may be listening. But help me up to the window; I want to see out.'

In spite of his long imprisonment the stranger seemed to have lost none of his activity, for, by the aid of Dantès' hands, he climbed to the high window as lightly as a cat. He even managed to pass his head between the bars, but withdrew it hastily after a second.

'I have found out what I wanted to know,' said he. 'The window looks out on a sort of terrace with sentinels every few yards, and no doubt patrols of soldiers constantly passing. I saw the helmet of one and the muzzle of his gun.'

'Well,' asked Dantès, 'what then?'

'It is impossible to escape that way.'

The two men were silent for a little, but the mere presence of a companion after so long a time had so excited Dantès that even the failure of his hope could not depress him for long, and he soon inquired his friend's name.

'I am the Abbé Faria,' was the reply, 'and for years I was secretary to the Cardinal Spada in Rome, the last of the family whose riches were once a proverb. But in my time little remained except a library of five thousand volumes, some valuable papers, and a breviary over three hundred years old. All these he gave to me when he died, as he did not leave a single relation behind him.'

'But why were you put in prison?' asked Dantès.

'Because I wanted to make Italy into one kingdom instead of a dozen, and Napoleon thought there should be only one Emperor of the world,' replied Faria.

'Then you are the priest who is said to be—ill,' said Dantès.

'Mad, you mean,' answered Faria. 'Yes, it is I.'

'But why do you say that flight is impossible?' You cannot expect to succeed the first time you try. Can't you begin again in another direction?'

'Begin again?' Do you know what you are talking about? It took me four years to make those tools, and

two years to scratch away earth which is as hard as granite. I had to loosen the soil round stones I could hardly lift, and burrow under a staircase. One does not do that twice in a lifetime, I tell you.'

If Faria had given up the idea of escape, his words had awakened the longing for freedom more strongly than ever in the heart of Dantès. Surely if the Abbé, who was double his age, could do so much he, a young man, might do infinitely more. In a moment he raised his head and looked at Faria.

'I know what we can do,' said he. 'Let us pierce a tunnel under the corridor, which will bring us out on the terrace. Once there, we have only to kill the sentinel and plunge into the sea. *That* part will be quite easy.'

'Perhaps,' answered Faria; 'but I will allow no man to be killed for my sake.'

'Not even to gain your liberty?' asked Dantès, wondering greatly.

'Not even for that,' replied the Abbé. 'Besides, have you ever noticed that the successful escapes are always those in which no blood has been shed? If you think of it, you will find it so.'

Dantès saw it was useless to say more, and soon the Abbé returned to his own cell, where the young man visited him next morning. It was paved with flagstones, and it was under one of these, which he had raised, that Faria had begun his operations. Hidden under another was a rope ladder which he had managed to make out of his shirts in his first prison, and a penknife he had constructed from an old iron candlestick. From that time they passed many hours together, but for a long while the subject of an escape was never mentioned between them. Then suddenly one day the Abbé startled Dantès by exclaiming:

'Oh, if it were not for that sentinel!'

'Ah, you are still thinking about it?'

'Always, always!' murmured the Abbé.

'And you have an idea?'

'Yes. If they would only place a blind and deaf sentinel at that end of the terrace.'

'The sentinel shall be both blind and deaf,' said Dantès firmly.

'No, no!' cried the Abbé hastily, and they spoke no more on the subject for three months.

'Are your arms strong?' inquired the Abbé one day; and in answer Dantès picked up the chisel, bent it like a horseshoe, and straightened it again.

'You will promise not to kill the sentinel except in self-defence?'

'I promise, on my honour.'

'In that case,' said the Abbé, 'we can set to work at once.'

'How long will it take us?'

'A year at least; for we must bore a tunnel under the long passage till we reach the gallery where the sentinel is placed. Exactly beneath the spot where he walks up and down we will make a large hole, and wait till he steps on the stone above, which will give way beneath him. Then you will gag and bind him, and we will escape by the help of the rope ladder down the wall of the fortress into the sea.'

Dantès' eyes sparkled with joy. It was all so simple that it was impossible it should fail, and that day the work was begun which took fifteen months to bring to an end. But at length everything was ready; a post had been discovered among the foundations which they used to support the stone, that the sentinel might not fall through till they were ready to escape, and Dantès was busy arranging this firmly when he heard a cry from the Abbé, who had gone back to his cell.

‘What is the matter?’ cried the young man as he beheld his friend with a livid face rolling on his bed.

‘I am lost,’ gasped the Abbé. ‘Once before this happened to me, and if I survive this attack I shall die in the next. Go to my cell, and in the foot of the bed, which is hollow, you will find a little bottle with red liquid. No, stay! You must drag me back to my own bed while I can still move. I can’t tell how long the fit may last!’

With immense difficulty Dantès contrived to get the Abbé through the passage and on to his bed. By this time the old man was icy cold, and trembled so that he could scarcely speak.

‘I shall fall into a trance,’ he stammered out, ‘and when you think I am dead, thrust your knife between my teeth, and pour some of that liquid down my throat. Perhaps it may revive me. But if I cry out first, wrap the coverlet over my head that no one may hear me.’

The next two hours Edmond never forgot. The old man flung himself about so that Dantès could scarcely hold him still; then he fell like one dead on the bed, and his limbs stiffened. As soon as this occurred Dantès gave him the red liquid, which he had ready, and after an hour of anxious watching he noticed faint signs of life.

‘Ah, you are safe now!’ he cried joyfully, as the Abbé opened his eyes, though it was some minutes before he could speak, and then only in a whisper.

‘You will go to-night,’ he said softly.

‘Without you? Never!’ replied the young man indignantly, but the Abbé shook his head.

‘Last time it only lasted half an hour,’ answered he, ‘and when it was over I could raise myself. Now my right arm and leg are paralysed and helpless, and my head is confused. The third time my whole body will

be paralysed and I shall die immediately. You have done all you can ; now escape.'

But Dantès would not go. He wished even to carry out the plan they had made, and drag the Abbé with him through the tunnel, and swim with him on his back when they reached the sea. The old man smiled and his heart warmed at the words, but he knew it was all impossible, and bade Dantès fill up the hole at the further end without delay, lest the sentinel should fall through and all be discovered.

As soon as the gaoler had paid his morning visit Dantès hastened back to the old man's cell. He found him looking better, and holding in his hand the breviary which he had drawn the previous day from under the hollowed stone.

'Do you see this paper ?' he said, holding out two fragments yellow with age.

'Yes, I see ; what of it ?' asked Dantès.

'It is my legacy to you. Learn it by heart, for you must destroy it. It is over three hundred years old, and tells where the great Spada treasure is buried in the desert island of Monte Cristo. If we had escaped I would have taken you there myself. Now you must go alone. The Spada family are all dead. You can accept it with a clear conscience.'

Dantès read the paper and studied it carefully to please his friend, but he thought much less of the treasure than of whether the Abbé would ever be well enough to share his flight.

One night, a short time after he had fallen asleep, Dantès was awakened by a cry. He opened his eyes and listened and the sound was repeated. Instantly he bounded out of bed and crawled through the tunnel to the Abbé's cell, where by the dim light of a little lamp the old man had made he perceived Faria bent double with the same horrible symptoms as before.

'It is the end,' he managed to utter between his teeth.

'No, no!' cried Edmond; 'I saved you before and I will save you again.'

'It is useless,' replied the Abbé, 'and this time it will be quick. In twenty minutes I shall be a dead man. Not even that liquid can revive me now.'

But Edmond would not listen, and when the Abbé lay stark and stiff before him, he thrust all that remained of the liquid into his mouth. In vain he waited for some trembling of the eyelids such as he had seen before. Nothing came.

At last he was convinced, and putting out the lamp and replacing the stone, he crept back to his cell, just as the gaoler's steps were heard along the passage. Then, hastening through the tunnel, he crouched down, so as to hear what happened when the turnkey discovered that death had delivered his prisoner.

The man's shouts speedily brought other gaolers to the cell, and then one went off to bring the governor and another to fetch the doctor.

'Poor fellow!' said the governor, stooping over him, 'he was quite harmless, but he always fancied he had some secret about a treasure. Well, he shall have a new sack for a coffin, and this evening we will bury him.'

'At what hour?' asked the gaoler.

'Between ten and eleven will be best.'

'And is someone to watch in the cell during the day?' said the man.

'No. Why? Lock the door as if he were alive. That will be enough.'

All that day Dantès remained crouched on his bed, once more possessed by despair. After the close companionship of the last months, he was alone again, and for ever! How could he bear it? 'If I could only die,' he thought, as he had thought before he had known

the Abbé, and he began to consider the different ways in which he might kill himself. 'I shall never leave my cell till, like Faria, I do so in a sack,' he murmured half aloud, and as he said the words he started to his feet and cold drops broke out on his forehead. 'Is that the way?' he whispered, with a frightened face. 'Well, since only the dead leave here, I must take the place of one.' And without giving himself time to think about it, he quickly crawled through the passage to the cell of the Abbé. Then, still in a desperate hurry lest his courage should fail him, he leaned over the bed on which lay the sack with the stiff burden outlined beneath it, and cutting open the mouth, drew out the body. Trembling all over, he placed it on his shoulders and made his way along the tunnel. When he reached his own cell he was almost exhausted and nearly fell on the bed. With a great effort he stretched out the corpse, turned the face to the wall, and tied round the head the strip of bright handkerchief which he himself, like many sailors, was in the habit of wearing, and stooping from the entrance to the passage, pulled the bed in front of the hole and returned to the vacant cell. Here he raised the stone, and drew from its hiding-place the rough needle and thread which the Abbé had made, and thrust under the stone the few rags that were all that remained of his clothes. Then he slipped into the sack, and, sewing up the hole, lay flat and stiff, as a dead man, with the knife beside him. But it was fortunate that nobody came in at that moment or they might have heard his heart beating.

Hours passed before he was disturbed, and he had plenty of time to make plans and to unmake them again. If he was buried in a cemetery he determined to allow the earth to be thrown over him—his grave was not likely to be very deep, he knew—and as it would be quite dark, he could shake it off as soon as the grave-diggers had departed. Of course, there was just the

chance that the men who were carrying him might discover the trick, but in that case he would cut open the sack with his knife and escape while they were still paralysed with terror. In any case, he was resolved not to be taken alive.

The first danger was the risk that the gaoler when he brought in Dantès' supper at seven o'clock might perceive that the figure on the bed was both shorter and thinner than his prisoner. But luckily the man had many times found Dantès lying in his bed, too miserable or too sulky to speak, and had then just put his supper on the table and had gone away without a word. And this is what happened now, and as the hours went by Dantès began to breathe freely again. So far he was safe.

Ten o'clock passed, and steps were heard along the corridor. Dantès knew what they meant. The two grave-diggers entered to carry off the corpse, and a third stood at the door bearing a torch. Stiffening his limbs with an effort of will and holding his breath till he felt as if he should burst, he waited, while the men took hold of his head and feet.

'He is pretty heavy for such a thin old man,' said one.

'They say we are half a pound heavier each year of our lives; perhaps that is the reason,' answered the other, and the sack was lifted on to a hand-barrow and carried down the corridor.

The rush of the fresh air, felt for the first time after fourteen years, nearly made Dantès betray himself, and when the barrow was placed on the ground, and one of the bearers departed, he wondered whether the moment of escape had not come. Happily he decided to wait, for in an instant the man was back again.

'Hold the torch lower,' he grumbled. 'How can I

see to tie this knot ? ' and Edmond felt a cord wound round his ankles and a hard knot tied.

' That is all right,' said the man ; ' now let us go on,' and on they went for a little distance till they heard the waves lapping against the walls of the castle.

' A dirty night,' remarked the other bearer. ' I should not care to be at sea myself.'

' No,' answered the first, ' the Abbé runs a chance of getting wet,' and they both laughed loudly, though Dantès did not understand the joke.

' Will this do ? ' asked one.

' No ; further on. You know the last one was dashed against the rocks, and the governor told us we were a pair of lazy dogs,' and they proceeded a few yards further up a steep path. Here they halted, and Dantès felt himself lifted by his head and feet and swung backwards and forwards.

' One, two, three,' and to his horror he was flying through the air for what seemed an eternity. Then suddenly he plunged into the water, with a leaden weight attached to his ankles.

The sea was the cemetery of the Château d'If.

Great as was the shock, Dantès did not lose his presence of mind ; ever since he had been in the sack he had held the knife in his hand, and now he quickly ripped a hole and pushed out his arm and his head. But the weight kept dragging him down, down, and his senses were rapidly leaving him ; he was almost lost when, with a violent effort, he pulled himself together and cut the cord which bound his legs. After that it was easy to shake himself free of the sack, which sank to the bottom with its weight of lead.

In former years Dantès had been noted among all the young men of his native coast for his skill in swimming and diving. A spark on the sea told him that the torch-bearer was still there, so he took a long dive and



THE CEMETERY OF THE CHATEAU D'IF

came up a far distance out to sea. The light had disappeared now, and he was alone; alone with the sea and sky, as he had never thought to be again. He grew almost giddy with happiness, and had to remind himself that he was not safe yet.

What course had he better take? Of the many islands which lay scattered about the Chateau d'If the three nearest were inhabited. Those he dared not visit; there was nothing for it but to swim to Tiboulén, over two miles away. But after fourteen years of prison had he not lost his strength? Could he do it? Then there flashed across his mind the words of Faria soon after their first meeting: 'Dantès, take heed, and try to harden your muscles, or you will be drowned in your first attempt to escape.'

The wind was blowing and the sea rising, but to his joy, and somewhat to his surprise, he was able to fight through the waves nearly as well as of old. Still, he felt the shadow of the prison upon him, though every stroke carried him farther away. Would it ever be possible to leave it behind? But he resolved not to think of such things; fortune had favoured him so far, and perhaps, after all, his luck had turned.

He had been swimming in the darkness for more than an hour, but suddenly he was conscious of a sharp pain in his knee. At first he imagined that he must have been shot; then he cautiously put out his hand and touched a rock. He had reached his goal—it was the island of Tiboulén.

Shaking the water off him like a dog, Dantès drew himself on to dry land, when a flash of lightning showed him a towering mass of rocks. Feeling his way up these—for he could see nothing without the aid of the lightning—he lay down at the top, and in spite of the noise of the storm and the violence of the rain, which was falling in torrents, went sound asleep, sheltered in part by an overhanging cliff.

It was still dark when he awoke, and the fury of the tempest seemed to have increased. By a flash more brilliant than the rest he beheld, only a quarter of a mile away, a little fishing boat being driven straight upon his island, with four men clinging to the masts. Dantès gave a cry of warning, but it was blown back in his throat, and in a few seconds a horrible cracking sound was heard, of which he knew too well the meaning. Then, silence.

Towards dawn the storm abated, and, as the sun rose, Edmond turned to look at the *Château d'If*.

'In two or three hours,' said he, 'the gaoler will enter my cell, and will find out that it is the Abbé who lies there, and not I. They will examine every corner, and the tunnel will be discovered. The alarm will be given and boats full of soldiers be sent in search of me, while notices will be despatched all down the coast. If I land I am at the mercy of anyone who cares to earn twenty francs. Yet I am starving. *What* am I to do? But as he spoke his eye fell on a small ship, coming from the direction of Marseilles, which he recognised as a Genoese cutter.

'Oh,' he cried a second time, 'what shall I do? In half an hour I could be on board if I was not afraid of being questioned and given up. They are smugglers, of course, and they touch at every port. But if I stay here I shall die of hunger. Yes, I must risk it. At least, no alarm has been given yet.'

Quickly he clambered from his perch, and was about to throw himself into the water when he saw one of the drowned fishermen's Phrygian caps, sticking on a rock, while some planks of the wrecked boat were floating close by.

'I am saved,' he murmured, drawing the cap over his head, and seizing the plank by way of support, he struck out with it to the cutter. Hope gave him fresh strength, but when he had approached within a quarter

of a mile, to his horror he perceived the ship's course was being altered. With a violent effort he raised himself in the water, uttering loud cries of despair and waving his cap in one hand. This time the sailors saw him; the helm was put about, a boat was lowered, and Dantès was hauled on board just as an immense weariness came over him and he felt he could swim no more.

When he came to himself he was stretched on the bridge of the cutter, with a woollen covering thrown over him. Rum was being slowly poured down his throat by one man, while another was kneeling beside him rubbing his limbs. For a while he lay still, but though his eyes were closed his consciousness had returned to him, and his brain was busily making up a story that he would tell the sailors when he was questioned.

They left him alone for some hours, but as soon as the captain thought he had recovered from his fatigue he came and sat by his side.

'I want to know,' he said, in bad French, 'who you are and how you happened to be alone in the sea this morning?'

'I am a Maltese sailor,' answered Dantès, in equally bad Italian, 'and the ship I was in was laden with Sicilian wines. It was driven on to those rocks down there and broken in pieces, and I only escaped by the help of one of the planks. I was so exhausted when your boat reached me that I could not swim another stroke.'

'Ah!' remarked one of the crew who stood near by, 'it was I who hauled you in, and I hesitated before I did it, I can assure you, for with your hair and beard you looked more like a brigand than an honest man.'

Then Dantès remembered that neither his hair nor beard had been touched since he entered the prison.

'Yes,' he answered hastily, 'I don't wonder. Ten years ago I was in great danger, and I made a vow that

if I escaped I would not shave for ten years. Luckily the time is up to-morrow, and the first thing I shall do when we get into port is to visit a barber.'

'And when we put you on shore what will you do next?' continued the captain.

'Oh, I shall be all right if you will lend me some clothes to land in,' replied Dantès, 'for as you saw I was perfectly naked. I know every harbour, little and big, along the Mediterranean, and there are very few that I couldn't steer into with my eyes shut. I shall get taken on as pilot quite easily.'

'Hum!' said the captain. 'I've heard other men in your condition promise as much.'

'Try me,' answered Dantès. 'Where are you going?'

'To Leghorn.'

'I will engage to steer you by a course shorter than any man on board.'

'Well, take the helm and we will see,' said the captain.

The promise was kept, and when they cast anchor, Dantès, in a shirt and trousers borrowed from one of the men, presented himself before the captain.

'I did not boast of what I could not perform,' said he; 'and now farewell for the present, as I am going on shore to seek a barber.'

THE HUNT FOR THE TREASURE

DANTÈS came out of the barber's shop a new man. The thick black beard had entirely vanished, and several inches of his hair had gone. For the first time in fourteen years he looked at himself in the glass, and felt sure that his own mother would not have known him. The round merry face that he had worn on his wedding day had disappeared for ever, and in its place was a pale, stern countenance with sad eyes. No ; he was quite safe, and could return with an easy mind to the smugglers' boat and accept the partnership offered him by the captain, who had never in his many voyages met with so skilful a pilot. Dantès might remain on board as long as he chose and nobody would suspect that he was other than the Maltese sailor he had given himself out to be. He had gone through one very bad moment a couple of hours after being taken on board *The Young Amelia*, when, just as he was drinking a glass of rum, a distant gun from the Château d'If came across the water. For half a second he stopped, his blood turning cold and a cloud dimming his sight.

'What is the meaning of that ?' asked the captain.

'It is the signal for the escape of a prisoner,' answered Dantès, as he lifted again the glass to his mouth. The captain turned and looked sharply at him, but on seeing him drinking quietly and with enjoyment, concluded he was mistaken, and thought no more about it.

But Dantès had understood.

So the vessel left Leghorn and steered her course for Corsica, passing a group of granite rocks which bore the name of Monte Cristo. In half an hour Dantès could easily have reached it, but he knew that before he could hope to find the treasure he would need many tools, and besides, it was necessary to lay his plans carefully so that no one should guess what he was doing. He had grown used to waiting by this time, and as he had waited fourteen years for liberty, it was not much to wait six months for riches.

From Corsica *The Young Amelia* set sail for Sardinia, shipping a cargo of cigars from Havana and Spanish wines which had paid no duty. Off Sardinia they had a skirmish with the Custom-house officers, in which Dantès received a wound. It was only a slight one, but it was dressed daily by the sailor who had rescued him, old Jacopo, his faithful friend.

Two months and a half went by, and his engagement on board *The Young Amelia* was drawing to a conclusion. He was now as good a captain as he was a pilot, and had made acquaintance with all the smugglers along the coast. He had also made a little money from the cargoes which they had sold, and felt that he might prudently carry out the plan he had formed for the search in Monte Cristo. But before this happened an unexpected event promised to place him on the island without any risk to himself.

One evening after they had cast anchor in Leghorn, the captain, who was most anxious to keep Dantès in his service, begged the young man to accompany him to supper in a tavern on shore, where the smugglers round Leghorn were accustomed to meet. As soon as they were all assembled, the captain, who presided, announced that the subject they were about to discuss was how best to arrange the exchange of their cargo of wine and cigars for a shipload of Turkish carpets

and the Cashmere shawls so highly prized by the French ladies. It was necessary to find some place which the Custom officers would not be likely to visit, and to his mind no spot would suit them so well as the distant and deserted island of Monte Cristo.

At the sound of the name so constantly in his thoughts Dantès could hardly repress a cry of joy, and to conceal his emotion he got up and walked to the window.

‘What do *you* think, Maltese,’ asked the captain as he passed; ‘you know these seas better than any of us.’

‘You will find no place more secure than Monte Cristo,’ answered Dantès; ‘only, if you are to succeed, you should lose no time, or the affair may reach the ears of the Custom-house people. To-morrow night, if the wind is fair, let us start.’

At seven o’clock on the following evening they weighed anchor and stood out to sea. One by one the stars came out, and at length Dantès, who gradually had obtained a sort of authority over the rest, told the crew that they might all turn in to their bunks, as he would be at the helm. ‘The Maltese,’ as they called him, was glad to be alone; he did not want company when he caught sight of Monte Cristo. Often as he had passed it, he had never landed on the shining rocks, and when, after more than twenty-four hours run with the wind behind them they cast anchor, he was the first to jump on shore.

‘Where are we going to sleep?’ he asked his friend Jacopo, when they had been working for some time hiding casks among the high rocks.

‘Why, on the ship, of course,’ answered the old man.

‘Not in the caves?’ said Dantès carelessly.

‘There aren’t any caves,’ replied Jacopo.

‘No caves on Monte Cristo?’ exclaimed Dantès,

amazed and horrified, for the paper given him by the Abbé had stated plain that it was in the 'caves' of the island that the treasure lay buried.

'No,' returned Jacopo, and Dantès stood thinking what it could all mean.

'Some rocks must have fallen and blocked the entrance,' he said to himself at last. 'There is no use searching for it in the dark; I must make some excuse to get away to-morrow, after the barque has been unloaded. Here she comes.'

Dantès need not have troubled himself as to whether he was to sleep on land or sea, for with the arrival of the other boat every man was kept busy. By the next day at sunrise the goods were out of one ship and into another, and Dantès had told the captain he meant to stretch his legs and shoot some wild goats. So taking with him a gun and some ammunition, he began to climb the rocks.

'We shall be ready to sail in three hours' time, and if you are not here we shall go without you,' called the captain after him.

'Oh, I shall be back,' answered Dantès, and went his way.

He chose a path which soon hid him from the sight of his companions, and which seemed no more than the bed of a stream, as perhaps it was. After a while he noticed little marks on the rocks that appeared to have been made by man.

'Could they,' he thought, 'have been traced by the Cardinal himself?'

After the marks had continued for about sixty yards they suddenly stopped. No cave was to be seen, but instead the path was blocked by a large round rock. Plainly the treasure was not to be found as easily as he expected; it was clear that he must remain on the island, and let the ship sail without him. So he turned back and clambered along the rocks to a point in full

view of the place where the sailors were preparing dinner on the shore.

He gave a shout, and they looked up to see him bounding towards them from rock to rock as lightly as a chamois. They watched him with admiration, when his foot slipped. He staggered, and then with a cry fell and disappeared. In an instant the men were making their way over the sharp granite till they reached Dantès, who was lying on the ground almost unconscious. A few drops of rum poured down his throat caused him to open his eyes, but as soon as he tried to raise himself a spasm of pain crossed his face, and he fell back again.

‘It is my knee,’ he said ; ‘and I think I must have hurt myself here,’ and he laid his hand on his thigh. ‘If you leave me to rest a little, perhaps I shall be able to move. Go and finish your breakfast,’ and he leaned his head against a stone.

The sailors were hungry and obeyed him, but when they returned in an hour’s time they found that Dantès had only had the strength to drag himself a few steps.

‘The pain is worse than ever,’ he said to the captain, who proposed that some of the men should carry him to the boat. ‘It is no use ; I can’t bear to be touched. Leave me some food, and enough powder and shot to kill some goats if I get better, and, in case you should be *very* long absent, a pickaxe to hew out a place to sleep in. The weather is warm ; I shall be all right.’

‘No, no !’ cried the captain, much to the surprise of the sailors who were listening. ‘I would sooner give up the whole thing than desert you like that. We will not sail to-night.’

‘But you *must*,’ answered Dantès ; ‘it is not fair to the men, who will lose their profits. It will not take you more than eight days, and if, on the way, you

should meet a fishing boat sailing in this direction, you could send it after me. I would pay them well to carry me back to Leghorn.' And so, after a few more words, it was settled, and with many promises of a speedy return they left him.

When the ship had disappeared in the distance



DANTÈS LEFT ON THE ISLAND

Dantès jumped up, and hastened to the path with the marked rocks, pickaxe in hand.

The May sun shone hotly, bringing out the smell of the myrtles that grew in the clefts. Grasshoppers hummed among the bushes, and at every step brilliant green lizards hastened to hide themselves. But there was no man on the island save Dantès himself.

The first thing he did was to trace back the marks to their beginning, which he found ended in a creek completely hidden till you were close to it, very small, but deep enough to allow of the entrance of a tiny boat. Here the Cardinal must have landed, and have carried his treasure along the path, which, when all was buried, he closed with the rock. Dantès stooped and narrowly examined the earth around and beneath it, and in spite of the grass and bushes which had grown about it during three hundred years, he thought he detected signs that man had once been at work there, and that the great rock was not so firmly fixed in the ground as it appeared. But in this he was mistaken, for a small stone was wedged under it—placed there, most likely, of set purpose—and this no blows from his pickaxe were able to dislodge. Then, just as he was almost in despair, his eye lighted on the powder flask which had been left him. Yes, *that* would do !

A mine was soon dug and filled with powder, while Dantès twisted his handkerchief into a long fuse, and set one end alight. Having made his preparations, he retired to a safe distance, and throwing himself on the ground face downwards, to avoid any splinters, he waited for the explosion.

It came, very soon and very loud, and it was well that Dantès before laying his train had first made sure that no vessel of any sort was in sight. The lower stone was blown to pieces, and the big rock, deprived of its support, swayed to and fro, so that only a vigorous push was needed to send it over. Down it rolled, down, down the side, till with one great leap it was swallowed in the sea. Fascinated, Dantès watched its progress before he turned to see if his hopes were realised. Ah ! he had been right after all, for under the rock was a huge round hole, in the midst of which was a large square stone with an iron ring. With the branch of

an olive tree he had cut down Dantès raised the stone, disclosing a flight of steps leading into darkness.

His search had been successful; yet, instead of feeling triumphant, his legs trembled under him. He was afraid lest a disappointment awaited him.

‘Come,’ he said to himself, ‘I am really too cowardly. Supposing, after all, that the Abbé was deceived, and the treasure has been discovered and removed long ago. I shall be no worse off than I was, and I am used to poverty.’ And he went slowly down the steps.

From the top it seemed as if no light could penetrate into the cavern, but to the eye of Dantès, accustomed for so long to the dim obscurity of his cell, the furthest corners were perceptible. The emptiness at first struck him with a chill; then he remembered that the paper had spoken of a second cave leading out of the first, and he tapped carefully with his pickaxe on the granite wall, listening lest one part should seem more hollow than the rest. Once again he had nearly given up hope, when at length he seemed to hear a difference in the sound, but it was so slight that no ear except that of an escaped prisoner would have heard it.

Here he began to work, but in a short time the closeness of the air and the fact that he had eaten nothing since the day before affected him without his knowing it. The pickaxe slipped from his hands; it felt too heavy to hold; and pretending to himself that he would make sure that nobody was watching him, he mounted the steps and sank on the grass.

After eating and drinking a little the fainting passed off, and he lay still to think; but it was curious that the more proofs he had that the Abbé’s paper had spoken truth, the more he was convinced that someone had been beforehand with the treasure.

However, he did not waste time in thinking. Very soon he took up his pickaxe and went back to his

cave, where he set to work to remove the plaster which covered the stones. As these were only piled loosely on one another, they were easily pushed aside, and Dantès entered. This second cave was to all appearance as empty as the first, but the corner on the left hand was very dark, and he made up his mind that it was here that the treasure must be buried.

Now that the moment had come when at last Dantès was to know the truth, he trembled like a child; then with a violent effort at self-control he struck at the ground.

The sixth blow fell upon an iron substance, and the noise rang through the cave. Very pale, Dantès again struck, but this time the answering sound was different. 'It is a wooden box bound with iron,' he said to himself; and stooping down he managed to touch the coffer. It was larger than he supposed, and the earth round it had still further to be loosened before it could be moved. By the light of a torch made from a tree he recognised engraved in the centre the arms of the Spada family, which he had often seen on an old book belonging to the Abbé; this set all his doubts at rest. The treasure was there, but he could neither lift the box out of the hole nor open it. What was he to do? Curiously enough, he felt as bewildered and helpless as a child.

He sat down for a few minutes to recover himself, and then took up the pickaxe afresh.

'I can't think what is the matter with me,' he murmured; and striking the lock, it gave way. Dantès lifted the cover, and there, in three compartments, lay the treasure which had been awaiting him for three hundred years; gold crowns in one, rough nuggets in another, precious stones in the third. Edmond touched them slowly one by one; then, turning, ran out of the cave.

When he reached the sea he stopped and looked about him, and by-and-by his excitement died away. He walked quietly back to the cavern, and, kneeling by the hole, tried to guess the value of the contents of the box. But in the effort his brain grew dizzy, and after replacing the stone across the entrance to the



THE TREASURE FOUND.

outer cave, stretched himself across it, and went to sleep.

His first care on awaking next morning was to make sure that no one had landed on the island during the night, and when he had satisfied himself that he was alone, he removed the stone which concealed the staircase, and going into the further cavern filled his pockets and some small leather bags which he had brought on

purpose with diamonds and jewels of various sorts. Then he put the rest back into the box, replaced the soil above it, and sprinkled sand over the whole floor. The stone covering the entrance to the staircase he likewise concealed under earth, and planted some tufts of heath and myrtle, which he carefully watered. This being done, he set himself to wait for the return of the boat and to get used to his good fortune.

On the sixth day after her departure Dantès beheld *The Young Amelia* approaching Monte Cristo. He dragged himself along the beach, and declared that he found after all that no bones were broken, and that the rest had nearly cured him. The sailors on their part were eager to tell their own adventures ; they had sold their cargo, it was true, but had narrowly escaped being captured by a brig which had chased them from Toulon till they had managed to get away in the dark. If the 'Maltese' had been there the brig would have been shaken off sooner ; and what a pity, too, he had lost his chance of fifty gold pieces !

The Young Amelia headed straight for Leghorn, and Dantès went on shore at once, and disappeared down one of the poorest and dirtiest streets of the town, where lived a Jew whom he had known long ago. This man agreed to give him twenty thousand francs, or 800*l.* of our money, for four small diamonds, which were worth a great deal more.

With this in his pocket he bought a small boat for old Jacopo, bidding him go without delay to Marseilles and find out all he could about a man who in former days lived there, called Louis Dantès, and a girl named Mercedes. On his way back Jacopo was to stop at Monte Cristo, where Dantès would probably be.

Then he took leave of his friends on board *The Young Amelia*, telling them that he had run away to sea when he was a boy, because his family would not

allow him to become a sailor, but that on his arrival in Leghorn he had received news that a rich uncle had died, and had left him all his fortune. They parted on the best of terms, and Dantès took ship the same day for Genoa. In this way ended the hunt for the treasure.

THE STORY OF THE GOLD BEETLE

Do you like stories of treasure hunts? If so, read this one, for it is the very best hunt in the whole world, and was the first tale of the sort to be told.

A little way from the coast of South Carolina in the United States lies an island, very narrow and green, and no more than three miles long. On the land side there was formerly a thick growth of reeds and rushes, full of wildfowl, which love a marsh, and at this end a Fort was built in which two or three men were always placed, in order to keep a look-out. Towards the open sea was a beach of dazzling white sand, while the centre was filled with a dense wood of sweet myrtle.

It was here, cut off from the Fort by the shrubs, which often grew as high as twenty feet, that William Legrand lived in a small hut, with Jupiter his negro servant. Jupiter had taken care of him ever since he was a little boy, and did not believe yet that 'Massa Will' had grown up. Indeed, one day when Massa Will had not returned home till very early in the morning, Jupiter went in search of a whip, and would have laid it across his master's shoulders if he had not looked so ill and worried. At least, this was the tale Jupiter told to Edward Robertson, the only person who ever came from the mainland to see Legrand.

Why Legrand chose to live on this tiny island nobody knew, and what was more, nobody cared.

The man himself seemed quite content, and his days were passed in fishing and in collecting shells on the beach or beetles in the myrtle bushes. The climate was delightful, for the sea breezes softened the heat in summer, while in winter it was seldom indeed that even Jupiter felt the need of a fire before the New Year.

A fire of wood was, however, burning one evening about sunset in the month of October a hundred years ago, when Robertson, after an absence of several weeks, knocked at the door of the hut. Nobody answered, and at length Robertson, tired of waiting, took down the key from its nail and walked in. There were no signs of either master or man, so the guest sat himself in the armchair and fell sound asleep. The darkness falls quickly in those southern lands, and not long after the last rays of the sun had disappeared Legrand entered, followed by Jupiter.

'Here you are at last, old man,' cried he. 'I thought you had given me up. But I have had good luck to-day, and have brought home some fine marsh hens. So Jupiter will soon have a supper ready fit for a king.'

'That's so, Massa Will,' replied Jupiter, grinning, and, kicking off his boots, Legrand flung himself at full length in front of the fire.

'Anything new for the collection?' asked Robertson lazily after a while.

'New? I should think there was! Yesterday I picked up a shell which I knew to be the very one all the learned men have been hunting for for two hundred years at least, and better than that—oh, *much* better!—the day before, when I was out with Jupiter, we found a splendid beetle on the high rocks, which must have been washed up during the last big gale.'

'What sort of a beetle?' asked Robertson, who knew that the question would please his friend, though he himself hated insects.

‘Oh, a wonderful creature! I’ve lent it to the man at the Fort; but I’ll show it to you to-morrow. You’ll stay here to-night, of course? It is really a marvel—about the size of a walnut and shines like gold. On its back at one end are two round black spots, and at the other end is another black mark that is rather longer.’

‘Gold! every bit of him,’ added Jupiter, ‘solid gold! I never felt a beetle half so heavy.’

‘Well, I must say it *does* look very like it,’ said Legrand. ‘Of course, you can’t tell till you see it to-morrow, but I can give you an idea of its shape,’ and as he spoke he opened the drawer of a small writing-table, where paper *ought* to have been but was not.

‘Never mind; I’ve got a bit here,’ and he pulled out of his pocket a piece of what seemed very dirty foolscap, and made a drawing on it with a pen. When he had finished he handed it to his friend, who was still sitting by the fire. Robertson bent forward so as to examine it better by the light of the flames, when a great Newfoundland dog pushed open the door, and seeing an old playfellow made a sudden spring at him and began furiously to lick his face, knocking, as he did so, the paper out of Robertson’s hand.

‘Be quiet! Down, old boy!’ but only when the dog had ended his welcome did he pay any attention, and stretched himself on the floor, rapping his tail loudly. Then Robertson picked up the paper and began to look at it.

‘You are right,’ he said, after a pause; ‘this is a most strange beetle. It is more like a skull than anything I ever saw.’

‘A skull!’ exclaimed Legrand. ‘Oh, well, yes. It does look like it there. The two black spots might be taken for eyes, and the other one for a mouth. And, of course, there is the shape.’

‘But, Legrand,’ remarked Robertson, ‘I thought you could draw better than that. I must wait till I see

the beetle itself. Now I can think of nothing but the skull.'

'Oh, it is quite a good sketch of the beetle,' answered Legrand rather sharply, for he prided himself on his drawing. 'You ought to be able to understand perfectly well.'

'It is a very good sketch of a *skull*; I can't imagine a better,' replied Robertson, handing his friend the paper that he might examine it himself more closely.

Legrand took it impatiently, meaning to crumple it up and throw it on the fire, when he suddenly caught sight of the sketch. To Robertson's surprise he turned first very red and then very pale, and, after staring at the drawing for a minute or two, took up a candle and sat down on a sea-chest in the farthest corner of the room and examined the paper through and through, holding it up to the light as if there was something about it that he could not understand. When he seemed to have satisfied himself that there was no more to be seen he locked the paper in a desk and gazed dreamily into the fire, apparently never hearing anything that his friend said. At length Robertson, feeling that no more conversation was to be got out of him, bade him good-night and returned to his home on the mainland.

During the month that followed Robertson was very busy and had no chance of visiting the island again; but one day, to his surprise, Jupiter paid him a call. It was easy to see that something was troubling the old negro, so Robertson made him sit down in the sun and asked him if anything was the matter and how his master was.

'Not so very well as he might be, to speak the truth,' answered Jupiter.

'Is it fever?' asked Robertson. 'What does he complain of?'

‘Nothing, sir. He never complains of nothing ; but he is very bad for all that.’

‘Is he in bed ?’

‘No, sir. I wish he was. That’s just where the



LEGRAND PUZZLED BY THE PAPER

shoe pinches. My mind is very heavy about poor Massa Will. He says there’s nothing at all the matter with him ; but then, what makes him go about with his head down and his shoulders up, and as white as a ghost ? And all day he keeps looking at some figures on

a slate—the queerest figures that ever *I* saw. I'm getting pretty frightened, I can tell you. The other day he gave me the slip before sunrise, and was gone the whole blessed day. I had a big stick cut to give him a good beating, but when he did come I hadn't the heart to do it after all, he looked so poorly.'

In spite of being really anxious, Robertson could hardly help laughing at the idea of the master being whipped by his man. However, Jupiter was perfectly serious, so Robertson choked down his laughter and answered gravely :

'No, I shouldn't flog him if I were you ; it doesn't sound as if he could stand it. But tell me, has anything strange happened since I was at the hut ?'

'No, sir ; not *since* then ; it was *before* then, I'm afraid. The very day you were there.'

'How ? What do you mean ?'

'Why—the beetle !'

'The what ?'

'The beetle. I'm certain sure that Massa Will was bitten somewhere about the head by that gold beetle.'

'Good gracious ! But what makes you think so ?'

'Well, sir, *I* never beheld such a beetle. He kicks and bites everything that comes near him. Massa Will caught him first, but he let him go mighty quick—seems as if he must have been bitten. I didn't like the look of his great mouth, so I laid hold of him with a piece of paper that I found in the sand. I wrapped him up in it and stuffed one end in his mouth—that was the way I caught him.'

'And you think it was the bite that made him ill ?'

'I know it was the bite. Why should he have dreamed about the gold so much if he hadn't been bitten by the gold beetle ? He just talks of it in his sleep all the night long.'

Robertson did not answer directly. It *was* strange, he thought, even though he did not believe in the bite

of the gold beetle. At length he said, 'Does he know you have come to me, Jupiter?'

'Yes, sir, he gave me this note. It is to ask you to come back with me to-night, sir.'

Robertson opened the note, and instantly perceived that something was troubling his friend, though there was nothing in it to tell him what it was.

'Well, let us go at once,' he answered, rising, and together the two walked down to the wharf, where Legrand's boat was lying. As Robertson stepped in he nearly fell over some things in the bottom, and on picking himself up, saw to his surprise the articles were a scythe and three new spades.

'What in the world are you going to do with those, Jupe?' asked he.

'Massa Will sent me into the town to buy them for him, and a fine lot of money I had to give for them,' replied the old negro. 'But as to what he means to do with them that's more than *I* know, and I don't believe *he* knows either! But it all comes of that beetle.'

The wind was behind them and soon blew them across, and a walk of two miles brought them to the hut about three o'clock. Legrand was eagerly awaiting them, but Robertson was shocked at his appearance. His eyes seemed to have sunk further into his face and glowed fiercely, while his skin was parched and shrivelled. Robertson hastily made a few remarks, and then inquired if the officer at the Fort had returned the beetle.

'Oh, yes,' replied Legrand, flushing with excitement. 'He sent it back next day. I wouldn't part with it for the world. Jupiter was quite right about it.'

'How?' asked his friend.

'In supposing it was of real gold,' and he looked so strange as he spoke that Robertson had no doubt he was really a little mad. He became still more certain of the fact as Legrand went on gaily, 'That beetle is to make

my fortune and to buy back the family estates. So it isn't wonderful that I prize it. But I forgot that you haven't seen it. Jupiter, bring it to me.'

'What, the beetle, massa? I'd rather not trouble that beetle; you must get him your own self,' and Legrand arose from his chair, and opening a glass case, brought out the most curious insect Robertson had ever seen. Its back was covered with hard shining scales, with two black spots at one end and a long one near the other, just as Legrand had drawn it a month before. But the strangest thing about it was its weight. If it had really been made of gold it could hardly have been heavier.

Legrand watched closely while Robertson was inspecting the beetle, and then he said, 'Now you have examined it are you prepared to do as I wish and come with me to-night across the hills?'

'Across the hills?' exclaimed Robertson. 'But you ought to be in bed. If you go about in this condition you will get brain fever.'

'I am much more likely to get it if I *don't* go,' and Robertson, on glancing at him, thought that his words might be true, so he answered reluctantly:

'What is it that you propose?'

'This is my plan. I mean to take Jupiter and go an expedition into the hills on the mainland, but I shall need a third man, and you are the only person I can trust. Will you come?'

'Has it anything to do with that horrid beetle, because if so I would rather stay at home?'

'Yes, it has. But if you refuse we shall have to try it without you.'

'Are you mad? How long will you be?'

'Probably all night. We shall start at once, but I do not expect to return before sunrise.'

'Well, if I go, will you promise when all this beetle business is settled that there shall be an end to it, and that you will stay quiet?'

'Yes, I promise ; and now let us be off,' and so they started.

The wind was behind them, and it was not long before they ran the boat ashore in a desolate part of the coast. Here a rope fastened her to a stone ; then Jupiter, frightened and sulky, took up the scythe and spades. Robertson lighted the way with a couple of dark lanterns, while Legrand contented himself with the gold beetle, which he had fastened to a piece of whipcord. Higher and higher they went, and wilder and more desolate grew the country. There was not a trace anywhere of a single human being, but in his former visits to this dreary spot Legrand had made certain landmarks which served to guide them now. After they had climbed for two hours the party reached a kind of platform half-way up a hill which was covered with wood from the base to the summit, broken here and there by deep gulleys or steep rocks. The trees in most places were so matted together by low brambles that it would have been impossible to pass through had not Jupiter cut them down with his scythe. This took a long while, and by the time a path was hewn the sun had set and there was only a new moon to guide them. However, led by Legrand they pushed on till they arrived at a level place where grew an enormous tulip tree, whose far-reaching branches spread over eight or ten oaks standing round.

Here Legrand stopped, and turning to Jupiter he said, 'Jupe, can you climb that tulip tree ?'

The negro looked rather alarmed, and going to the tree he examined it closely. Then he answered, 'Yes, massa. Jupe climb any tree he ever saw in his life.'

'Up with you then ; we have no time to lose.'

'How far must I go, massa ?' asked Jupiter.

'You get up the trunk and I'll tell you. But stop ! Carry the beetle with you.'

'That, massa! Me carry up that?' cried poor Jupiter, shrinking in dismay.

'Do you mean to say that you are afraid—a great big negro like you—to catch hold of a little harmless dead beetle? Why, you can carry it by the string. I shall have to break your head with this shovel.'

'Oh, massa! what a fuss you make,' answered Jupiter, rather ashamed of himself. 'I was only funnin'. *Me* feared of it? What do I care for the beetle?' and keeping the string at a safe distance from him he began to climb the tree.

In spite of its size the tulip tree was not so difficult to mount as it looked, for it was so old that the smooth trunk had become rough and full of round bosses, and had even put out some short boughs, which gave ample foothold for the negro's naked feet. At last a voice was heard coming from a long way up: 'How much farther must I go?'

'Count how many branches are below you on this side,' shouted Legrand.

'Six, massa.'

'Then go up one more.'

For a few minutes there was silence, then Jupiter cried again: 'All right, massa. What now?'

'Work your way along that branch as far as you can,' called Legrand, who was greatly excited, 'and if you see anything strange let me know.'

Again there was a pause, and then a cry from Jupiter: 'I'm most afraid to venture very far; the branch is dead pretty much all the way.'

At this news Legrand trembled and turned white, and his friend became more than ever certain that he had lost his senses. But in a moment his face cleared, and he shouted through the branches: 'Try the wood with your knife and see if it is *very* rotten.'

Jupiter obeyed. 'Not so very rotten as might be,'

he answered at last. 'I might venture a little way out by myself.'

'By yourself? What do you mean?'

'Well, without the beetle. It's a *very* heavy beetle. Suppose I was to drop him down first, and then the branch won't break with the weight of one old nigger.'

'You scoundrel!' shouted Legrand, though he was plainly much relieved. 'As sure as you drop that beetle I will break your neck. But if you hold it tight and crawl along that branch as far as you think it is safe I'll give you a silver dollar as soon as you get down.'

'I'm going, Massa Will,' answered Jupiter. 'I'm most out to the end now. Ah! Ah! What is that horrid thing?'

'What? What?' exclaimed Legrand, who was highly delighted. 'Well, what *is* it?'

'Why, a skull; nothing but a skull! Somebody has left his head up the tree.'

'A skull you say. Well, how is it fastened on?'

'Ah! I must look. Why, there's a great big nail in the skull, that fastens it on.'

'Now, Jupe, do exactly as I tell you. Find the left eye of the skull.'

'He, he! that's good. Why, there ain't no eye left at all.'

'You idiot! Do you know your right hand from your left?'

'Yes, I know that; all about that!'

'Then find the place in the skull where the left eye has been. Have you found it?'

There was a long pause. At length the negro asked: 'Is the left eye of the skull on the same side as the left hand of the skull too? Because the skull hasn't got not a bit of a hand at all. Never mind! I've got the left eye now! Here's the left eye! What must I do with it?'

'Let the beetle drop through it as far as the string will reach, but be careful not to let go the string.'

'All that done, massa Will. Mighty easy thing to put the beetle through the hole. Look out for him there below.'

During this conversation not a sign could be seen of Jupiter in the branches, but now the two men caught



a glimpse of the beetle hanging low at the end of the string, shining like solid gold. It dangled in the air, straight down from the branch, and if Jupiter had let go the string it would have fallen at their feet. But calling to the negro not to move, Legrand seized the scythe, and cleared away the brambles and grass underneath the beetle, till he had lain bare quite a large space in the form of a circle.

‘Now drop it,’ he cried, and Jupiter thankfully let the beetle drop on the ground.

Meanwhile Robertson had silently watched Legrand and became more and more uneasy at his growing excitement. That his friend was mad he was now entirely convinced, but as long as his proceedings were harmless he determined not to interfere. What would Legrand do next? he wondered; and what Legrand did was very strange indeed.

First he cut a peg from a bush and drove it into the earth at the very place where the beetle had dropped. Next he took a measuring-tape from his pocket, and tied it to a small branch on the side of the tree in a line with the peg. He then unrolled it, counting his steps as far as the peg, and on again till he was about fifty feet from the tree. Here he drove another peg, and waited till Jupiter came down and mowed a circle about twelve feet round.

‘That is all right,’ he exclaimed joyfully; ‘we can all begin to dig now,’ and as he spoke he thrust a spade into Robertson’s hands, and, snatching up a second, quickly threw up the earth. Very unwillingly Robertson followed his example; he was no gardener at any time, and at that moment was very tired with his long climb, but he dared not refuse, for fear of irritating the excited Legrand.

So as soon as the lanterns were lit all three men fell to work, and dug silently and steadily for two hours, the only sound being occasional barks from the dog, who took as much interest in the hunt as his betters. Indeed at last he grew so noisy that Legrand was afraid that he might be overheard by some passing stranger, and bade Jupiter tie up his mouth with his handkerchief.

The hole was now five feet deep, and still nothing had been found. With a face of disappointment, Legrand flung down his spade, and speechless with disgust, put on his coat while he signed to Jupiter to pick up the tools and to unmuzzle the dog. Robertson,

thankful that the affair had at last come to an end, held his peace, and turned to follow the others down the hill.

But he had rejoiced too soon. They had hardly gone a dozen yards when Legrand suddenly gave a loud cry and seized the astonished Jupiter by the collar.

'You villain!' he shouted, 'it is all your fault. Tell me, you scoundrel, which is your left eye?'

'Oh, gracious, massa Will, ain't *this* my left eye?' placing, as he spoke, his hand over his *right*.'

'I thought so—I knew it,' and Legrand began to wave his arms about in so wild a manner that his companions were more alarmed than ever.

'We must go back at once,' he continued; 'there is still another chance,' and he raced back along the path, with the weary Robertson behind him.

'Jupiter,' he said more quietly when they reached the tree, 'was the skull nailed to the branch with its face *outwards*?'

'Yes, massa, that's so. It was outwards.'

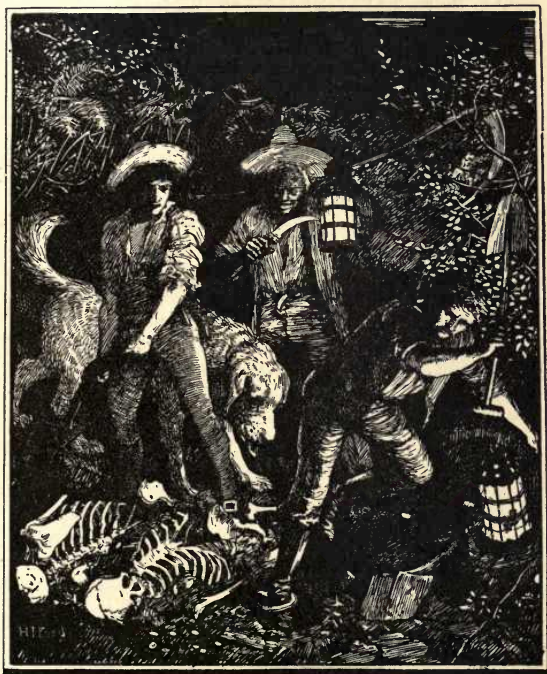
'Then was it *this* eye that you dropped it through?' asked Legrand, pointing to the negro's right eye.

'Yes, massa, this eye—the left eye—just as you told me,' answered he.

'Well, we must try it again,' said Legrand, and he moved the peg where the beetle had fallen about three inches to the west of the spot where he had first put it. Then he took his measurements again, and drove in another peg at a distance of several yards from the place where they had dug before.

Curiously enough, in spite of his fatigue, Robertson had begun to see a glimmer of light in Legrand's actions, and was wondering if he had not been deceived in so hastily determining that his friend was a lunatic. He was now quite eager to do his part in the digging, and after the circle had been cleared they worked on silently

for an hour and a half, when they were startled by the violent howls of the dog. Jupiter approached him with



"His toe caught in an iron ring"

the handkerchief, but he snarled and showed his teeth, and springing into the hole began to scratch. In a minute or two he had laid bare two skeletons with some strips of cloth clinging to the bones and some metal buttons.

Pushing the dog aside, Legrand threw up another spoonful of earth and came upon a Spanish knife and a few gold coins.

'Is that *all*?' exclaimed Legrand in a voice full of disappointment, though Jupiter's eyes shone with delight. 'Well, it is quite useless; we had better go,' and Robertson, in spite of his opinion as to the folly of the affair, felt a pang shoot through him. But at the instant his toe caught in an iron ring that had been hidden by some loose earth, and he tumbled heavily forwards.

Legrand had seen, but said nothing. Only he began to dig as man had never dug before. After ten minutes they uncovered a large box of wood with iron bands, far too heavy to lift had not three rings been fastened to each side, by which it was just possible for the three men to raise it slightly. Full as it was of something very heavy, it was madness to think of carrying it away unless it was partly emptied, and this they were luckily able to do, for the box was shut by two sliding bolts. Slowly, for they were rusty indeed, these were drawn back.

Since the world began perhaps no eyes had ever looked on such a mass of treasures in so small a space. Precious stones, crowns, belts, bowls, besides piles and piles of golden coins. At the sight Jupiter appeared turned into stone, and then falling on his knees in the hole and letting great handfuls of the gold slip through his fingers, he exclaimed:

'And all this comes from the gold beetle, the pretty gold beetle which I abused in that savage kind of style. Ain't you ashamed of yourself, nigger? Answer me that.'

As Legrand stood still, staring at the treasure, and showed no signs of moving, Robertson at last touched his arm.

'If we are to get these things to the island before

daylight we must start now,' he said; 'but you had better make up your mind what you are going to take.'

This was not easy, but time pressed, and at length it was decided to hide all that could not be removed among the thick bushes and tall grass, and to leave the dog as guardian, while they carried the chest between them back to the hut, returning at once for the rest.

Fatigued as they all were, nothing but excitement would have enabled them to execute this plan, and in after days they often wondered at their strength. But somehow or other it was done, and by four o'clock they were again in the hut, unnoticed by any human being, and able to sleep for some hours, totally exhausted.

When they awoke and had had some food they were able to examine their treasure a little more calmly.

They were in no hurry, and it was a joy to them, after all their fatigue, to handle each beautiful thing, and to hold the jewels up to the sun and watch how the light flashed through them. Then there was the money to be counted; all gold—great heavy pieces from every country in Europe, and some of them so old that they could not make anything out of the worn-out letters. There were also nearly two hundred gold watches, all of them useless, but with backs of dark blue enamel, covered with pearls and diamonds, and quantities of other curiosities such as the two men had never seen or dreamt of.

At length the counting was over, and it had lasted the best part of two days, and when the treasure was put safely back in the box, and hidden in a hole dug amongst the myrtle bushes, Robertson said to Legrand:

'I think I have been very patient, but I can wait no longer. You *must* tell me how you came to guess at the existence of all that gold, and *where* it was buried.'

'Well,' answered Legrand, 'do you remember that

evening a month ago when you came here, and I showed you the rough sketch I had made of the beetle, you declared that it was a skull ? I am rather proud of my drawing and did not like it to be laughed at, so when you handed it back I crumpled it up, and was going to throw the parchment into the fire, when to my surprise I saw a skull just in the very place where I thought I had drawn the beetle. I took the candle into the corner, and examined the parchment again, and found that since I had sketched the beetle on *one* side of the parchment, the skull had appeared in exactly the same place on the other side. Now I knew very well there had been no skull there when I made my sketch, for I had looked up and down for a clean spot, which was hard to find, and could not have helped noticing the skull. It was very strange, but I did not wish to talk of my discovery till I understood it better, so as long as you were there I said nothing.

‘When you and Jupiter were both gone I began to think out the puzzle step by step. We had picked up the beetle on a lonely part of the mainland, a little above high-water mark, while it was basking in the sun on a rock. As soon as I touched it it bit me sharply, and flew towards Jupiter. Warned by my cry of pain he looked about for something to wrap round his hand before trying to catch it, and he saw sticking out of the sand this bit of parchment, and near by the hull of a ship’s boat. This had probably lain there for long, but a furious gale must have recently blown the sand away and left it exposed to view.

‘Wrapping the beetle in the parchment I brought it home, and on the way met young Gates, commanding the Fort, who is as fond of natural history as I am myself. He begged me to let him keep it for the night, and put it loose in his pocket. I suppose I must have put the parchment in mine without knowing that I did so—anyhow, that was where I found it when I was

searching for a piece of paper to make the sketch to show you.

‘I was turning these things over in my mind after you had left me when an explanation suddenly flashed across my brain. I had been sitting near the fire when I drew the beetle, and *you* were stooping over it to see more clearly when Wolf leaped on your shoulders and knocked the parchment on to the hearth. Reflecting on these various events, I recollected that certain chemicals could be used to write with on either parchment or paper, which would remain quite invisible unless they were exposed to heat. This, surely, had happened here, and, full of excitement, I threw more wood on the fire and held the parchment as close to it as I dared. At first the skull only stood out more clearly, but by-and-by I saw in the corner of the parchment, which was a long and narrow slip, the figure of a kid.

‘I see by your face that you think I am raving, but wait a little. The skull, as everybody knows, is the emblem of a pirate, and no pirate-ship ever goes into battle without hoisting a flag with a death’s head on it. Then, was not the greatest of all pirates Captain Kidd, and is not the kid drawn in the very place where a man would put his signature? I was full of triumph when this notion occurred to me, but one fact still perplexed me—there seemed to be no letter filling the space between the skull and the kid.

‘This was a disappointment, but in spite of it I had a strange feeling that some good luck was going to befall, and all at once I remembered the stories I had heard ever since I had lived in this island that Kidd and his followers had buried some of their plunder along this deserted coast. Of course I knew he might have died before he could reclaim it, or the parchment enabling him to trace the spot—perhaps this very slip—may have been lost, or it might have been already found

and secretly removed ; but in any case I meant to do all I could to get hold of the treasure, to which I had as good a right as anyone else.

‘ Picking up the parchment again from the floor where it had fallen I passed my finger tips lightly over it. It was very greasy, as well as very dirty—might not both dirt and grease prevent the heat of the fire from acting as it should ? So I boiled some water and poured it carefully over the parchment, and then laid it over a pan of burning charcoal. After a few minutes I took the slip away and looked at it. Yes, there sure enough were several lines of dots and figures, but they were as yet too faint to make out. I held the parchment again over the pan, and after a little while the dots and figures stood out plainly. If I put the parchment to the fire you can see for yourself.’

Now what Robertson saw was something very odd and curious, and he could not understand it at all. But some persons, and Legrand was one of them, are fond of making out puzzles, and may like to discover this one, which is quite easy. If they do not, they can skip it, and pass on to the explanation which Legrand was obliged to give his friend.

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‘ I am as much in the dark as ever,’ said Robertson, when he had stared at the slip for some time. ‘ If all the jewels in the world depended on my reading it, I should have to give them up.’

‘ Oh, it is really quite simple,’ answered Legrand ; ‘ I have found out many more difficult puzzles when I was a boy. Of course the only thing that makes it hard is the fact that there are no divisions between the words. But in cyphers of this kind you begin by seeing

which sign occurs most frequently, and then you know that you have got hold of the letter E. After that you next look for the sign E combined with two other letters, and you guess at once that the word is "the," so you now have three letters to start with. A sign standing alone is "a" or "I," and words of two letters are "in," "to," "of," "at," and so on. Here, where the words are undivided, you must work from the letters you are certain of, and then read down the page of a book and count which letters of the alphabet are used most frequently, and which letters can be doubled and which not. This you soon discover with a little practice; you can try for yourself. However, I will tell you at once the meaning of the cypher, which is thus: "A good glass in the bishop's hostel in the devil's seat forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes north-east and by north main branch seventh limb east side shoot from the left eye of the death's head a bee line from the tree through the shot fifty feet out."

'It sounds amazingly clever to me,' replied Robertson, 'but I am as far as ever from understanding how it enabled you to find the place of the hidden treasure.'

Legrand laughed.

'There doesn't seem much connexion, I confess,' said he, 'but I saw that the first thing to do was to form separate sentences. That was very soon accomplished, and then the words read thus:

"A good glass in the bishop's hostel in the devil's seat—forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes—north-east and by north—main branch seventh limb east side—shoot from the left eye of the death's head—a bee line from the shot fifty feet out."

'Well, even then I was not much wiser; but I had one thing to go upon, that *somewhere* there existed a place or a building known as "the bishop's hostel" or "hotel." Very cautiously I made some inquiries of the people on the mainland, but no one could tell me

anything. I was nearly in despair, when one day it flashed across me that "Bishop" might really mean "Bessop," for an old family of that name had long held possession of a manor-house about four miles to the north of the extreme end of this island.

'Next day I went over to the Bessop plantation, and fell into conversation with the oldest negroes I could find there. Of course I was very careful not to betray my interest in the "Bishop's hostel," so began by asking questions about all sorts of places in the neighbourhood which I knew quite well. By degrees I worked back to the point I really wished to reach, and then I found that the most ancient woman of all had been long ago to a spot called "Bishop's castle," but it was only a rock with a curiously shaped seat.

"Dear me! how strange it must be! I should rather like to see it too, as I am about here," said I. "If you can show me the way to it I'll give you a couple of dollars." Her eyes glistened, but she would not consent at once, declaring that it was a long way for her old bones, and perhaps she might have forgotten the path. But in the end she came, and when she pointed to a group of rocks, one of them towering over the rest, I paid her the money and sent her home again, my heart beating with triumph.

'Yet after all, as I thought a moment after, what had I gained? Merely the fact that the cypher had told the truth in one particular, and I was no nearer than before to the hidden treasure. So I tried to prepare myself against disappointment; but my reason told me that proving that the slip had been right in the first instance meant a great step in advance. So I set about examining the rocks, and climbed to the tallest of all, from which I could see over the rest.

'Up and down I gazed, but as often happens nearly missed the "seat" for which I was in search, as it lay close under my feet on the eastern face of the rock. It

was a sort of rough chair a foot wide, with a back formed by a niche in the ledge above it ; and when I clambered down to it, I found it was not at all uncomfortable. But there was one curious thing about the chair, when you came to consider its connexion with the treasure, and that is that it was impossible to sit in it in any position except one.

‘ For by this time I had, of course, guessed that the seat was to be a starting-point in the discovery ; but before I could make any further progress it was necessary to have the “ good glass,” which I returned home to fetch.

‘ By help of a pocket compass I soon was able to fix the direction of “ north-east and by north,” and then I pointed my telescope to “ forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes ” above the horizon, as near as I could judge. At first I noticed nothing special, so I carefully shifted my telescope a little higher or a little lower, and then I perceived a round opening in the branches of a large tree a long way off. In the midst of the opening was a tiny white spot, which with some difficulty I made out to be a skull.

‘ After this it was quite plain what I had to do in order to reach the treasure—or, at any rate, the spot in which it had been hidden. Cautiously I rose from the “ Bishop’s hostel ” and stepped a foot backwards : the rift in the tree had vanished completely ! Again I changed my position ; it was still nowhere to be seen ; in fact, only from the seat itself was the opening visible. Beyond all doubt the place of hiding had been chosen by design and not by accident.

‘ With the utmost pains—for the whole thing depended on it—I marked the whereabouts of the tree, and the following morning set out to find it. In spite of all my precautions it was some time before I contrived to hit upon the right spot, and was so late in returning home that night that Jupiter proposed to give me a flogging !

‘As to the skeletons which Wolf uncovered, they were probably those of men killed and buried by Kidd when once they had helped him carry up the treasure to the tree and dig the hole for the box. They little thought they were digging their own grave also ; for Kidd would be afraid to let them live, lest they should betray his secret.

‘And now you know the whole story.’

Shortened from E. A. Poe.

LORETA VELAZQUEZ THE MILITARY SPY

FOUR years before the outbreak of the American Civil War, a young Spanish girl might have been seen very early one morning stealing noiselessly across a sweet-scented garden on the outskirts of Havana, in the island of Cuba. People grow up very quickly in hot climates, and Loreta Velazquez at fourteen was really older in many ways than an English girl of twenty, and certainly none of her friends looked on her as a child. She was tall and handsome, and her parents expected her to marry some rich planter in the island, and gave but a cold welcome to the young American officer who frequently rode over from the house where he was staying to lounge about under the shady trees with Loreta.

‘Oh, well, his leave will soon be up, and there will be an end of it,’ they said; and this was how it happened that Loreta was crossing the garden that morning in order to join her lover, who had arranged for them to be married as speedily and as secretly as possible.

Three children were born to them by the time Loreta was eighteen, but neither lived more than a few months, and when she was left alone life seemed very dull to their mother. Dull, that is, as far as home went, for outside men were in a state of excitement such as had not been known since ‘the Boston Cup of Tea’ had heralded the outbreak of the War of Independence against England. ‘Slavery’ or ‘No Slavery’ became the party cries, and very soon the ‘United States’ were united no longer, but had split into the ‘North’ and the ‘South.’

It was hard for Loreta's soldier-husband to be forced to make a choice, but his own native State joined the 'South' or 'Confederate' side, composed largely of the owners of plantations which had been worked for generations by slaves. Now you must not suppose that many of these plantations were like some described in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' if you have ever read that famous book; but the terrible thing was that they *might* be. It was quite right that slavery should be put an end to, but if men had been calmer perhaps some peaceful settlement might have been found. As it was, they plunged into war, and for four years the struggle raged, and some of the richest States of the Union were laid waste for years.

Loreta had never rested till she had persuaded her husband to join the Confederates, but when once she had done so she declared her intention of fighting for them herself. The poor man stood aghast, and thought his ears had deceived him, or that his senses were going. Of course he had constantly heard his wife exclaim like Beatrice, 'Oh that I were a man!' and 'If I were a soldier I should do this or that,' but he had imagined these were mere words, and that she would stay at home and keep things together and see after the plantation as the other Confederate ladies did. Now, however, he saw that she was in earnest, and he spoke to her seriously and told her plainly the difficulties that even a man had to go through, the horrible sights he was forced to see, and the dreadful deeds he sometimes had to do. And supposing she could endure these, how would her body stand heat and cold, long marches and scanty food, brought up as she had been to rest upon cushions, to sleep during the heat of the day, to have iced drinks brought her if she was thirsty, and ripe fruit when she was hungry? But he might as well have spoken to the winds.

'Yes, that is quite true, but other women have done

without all that, and so can I,' was the only answer she would give him, and, very uneasy as to what would happen, he went off to join his regiment.

No sooner had he departed than Loreta began her preparations. She first ordered some padded coats to be made in order to disguise her figure, but these proved so very hot and heavy as to be almost useless. She was notwithstanding forced to wear them till she could reach New Orleans, for there was no one in the smaller towns who could invent anything better. But in New Orleans there was a clever little Frenchman, an army tailor by trade, and to his skill she trusted. He had besides the excellent quality of 'minding his own business and not bothering himself about other people's affairs,' so when a young and pretty lady appeared before him—for he knew her at a glance not to be a man—the only question he asked was, how he could serve her. Loreta on her part understood that as far as the tailor was concerned her disguise had been in vain, and explained what she wanted. After a long consultation it was decided that he should make her 'half a dozen fine wire net shields' (they sound like a sort of chain armour) to wear next her skin, which she found 'by no means uncomfortable,' and over the net shield she wore a close-fitting under shirt with a belt. By a clever contrivance she managed to make her 'pantaloons' or trousers to stand out round her waist, so as to give the appearance of being the same size all the way down as a man is, and when once her uniform was complete it took 'Lieutenant Harry Buford'—for this was the name she adopted—a very short time to feel quite at ease amongst officers and men.

Well pleased with herself, Loreta left New Orleans, and with a regiment of recruits which she raised set out for the old Jesuit settlement of Pensacola, where her husband was quartered. He had heard nothing of her since they parted, and was immensely surprised to see

her in her new costume. She was in high spirits at her success, and begged her husband to help her to drill her troops, as the books on tactics and regulations she had with her were not of much use at this early stage. This he at once agreed to do, and a great standby she found him. But in giving a lesson on a gun to the sergeant of the regiment, the carbine exploded and he fell dead on the spot.

Thus ended the short married life of Loreta Velazquez.

Now it is plain that Loreta's ignorance of drill and of other subjects concerning war might have very soon caused awkward inquiries to be made about her had she been serving in a regular army, but in those disturbed times many strange events took place, and as long as recruits were brave and willing a great deal was overlooked.

Loreta was both, and had besides the knack of picking up things and making the best of herself, and it was not long before she was as good a shot and as clever a scout as any of the raw newcomers in the Confederate army. For a scout was what she had decided to be, and though this had its drawbacks in some ways, it left her independent in others, and lessened the risks of the discovery which she feared more than anything else in the world.

Her first great experience was at the battle of Bull's Run, which she calls 'the supreme moment of her life, when all the glorious aspirations of her romantic girlhood were on the point of realisation.' Some of the freshly enlisted soldiers were white as death and trembling with fear; but Loreta eyed them with wonder, being herself as eager for the fight as any veteran. As it happened, the tide of battle set her way, and General Bee, under whose command she had placed herself, marched across the valley to support the regiments which were trying to beat back the much larger forces of the North or Federal side. From dawn till late after-

noon the struggle continued under the heat of a July sun, and 'the dry and motionless air was choking to the nostrils,' but Loreta 'would not have missed it for all the world,' and appears to have enjoyed every moment of the day. When at length victory declared itself for the Confederates, her happiness knew no bounds, and the next morning, under the name of Lieutenant Harry Buford, she applied to General 'Stonewall' Jackson for promotion. Jackson, however, for some reason or other only gave her 'a recommendation to General Bragg for a recruiting commission,' which she did not care for, and, after waiting about some time in the hope of taking part in another battle, she returned to Richmond to see what would turn up.

After her rather bloodthirsty excitement at Bull's Run, one is glad to know that for a while she was 'haunted night and day by the terrible sights and sounds of the battle' at Ball's Bluff, though she soon begins to feel 'an insatiable desire for another.' Like many women, Loreta was exceedingly restless, and it was an 'absolute necessity for her to be in motion.' It was lucky for her that she was never called upon to bear the dreary strain of a long siege, for she would probably have tried to escape, and might have been shot as a deserter. As it was, she employed her thoughts in efforts to discover some plan 'which would give her mind and body constant employment,' and, hearing that the generals had great difficulty in getting hold of true information as to the movements of the Federal army, she determined to penetrate, if possible, into the enemy's lines. This, she frankly remarks, 'would give her the excitement she craved, whatever the result.' And one of the possible 'results,' which she does not seem to have considered, was that if caught she would certainly be shot as a spy.

As was her habit, Loreta consulted no one as to her project, except one friend, whom she informed that for

purposes of her own it would be necessary for her to put on woman's dress for a few days, and begged him to keep her secret. She next went to see an old negro woman whom she knew well, and told her a long story of 'wishing to go to the Yankees in order to find out what they meant to do about freeing the coloured people,' and easily persuaded the old soul to sell her a suit of clothes for twenty dollars, or five pounds. Then, arrayed in a print dress, a woollen shawl, a sun-bonnet, and a pair of shoes so big they would hardly keep on, the spy made her way to the river Potomac. Winter was now approaching, and it was bitterly cold, but in spite of the shoes Loreta reached the river in safety. After searching the banks for some time, she found a negro who owned a boat, and who agreed to ferry her across into the State of Maryland for twenty dollars.

The boat was small, and during the three hours that the passage lasted Loreta was sitting in such a cramped position that when at length she got out on the Maryland shore she was almost too stiff to walk. It was about four o'clock by this time, and still pitch-dark, so, with a good deal of self-pity at the hardships she had to endure, and a good deal more of admiration at her courage in enduring them, Loreta crept into a wheat-stack in a farmyard and fell asleep.

About dawn she awoke very hungry, and resolved to go to the farmhouse and beg for some breakfast. In her clumsy dress, with stalks of wheat hanging about her, she was aware that she looked a strange object, and that the farmer eyed her with suspicion. But Loreta had expected this, and had prepared a fresh story—or rather, *two* fresh stories, according as the farmer might prove to be a Confederate or a Northerner. As soon as he turned out to be on her own side, she gave a long account of a battle which had lately taken place, and was invited in return to an excellent breakfast. Like a true American, the farmer's wife was full of pity for the ugliness of

Loreta's clothes, and insisted on dressing her in some of her own, which were much smarter.

At last she arrived in Washington, the capital of the United States, and after going to an hotel to make herself tidy, she sent a message to an old friend of her husband's, now an officer in the Federal army, begging him to come to see her. Of course she had a new story ready for *him*—Loreta quite enjoyed making up all these stories—and then they had a comfortable talk about the war; what *had* happened and what was likely to happen. The Confederate victory at Ball's Bluff had, she learned, been a great blow to the people in the North, but the Federals hoped to make up for it by blockading the mouth of the Mississippi, and so securing the possession of the country above.

This was news indeed, but Loreta was careful not to show her satisfaction or to ask too many questions. After a few days spent in Washington she bade her friend good-bye, saying that she was starting for New York, where she had some business; but instead she hurried back to the old negro woman at Leesburg, eager to put on her uniform again.

The next day she started for the State of Tennessee, where General Polk, under whom she wished to serve, was stationed.

To her great joy there seemed every prospect of immediate fighting, for the Federals were about to attack the strongly defended Fort Donelson, on the Tennessee River, and General Pillow, with his Confederate garrison, was working night and day to throw up earthworks to protect it. Loreta was as desirous as ever to prove herself the equal of anybody, but, as she truly remarks, 'there are some things which men can do better than women, and digging entrenchments in the frozen ground is one of them.' So she left off—nobody apparently minding—and tried to make herself useful in a different way.

The expected attack occurred on the night of February 13, 1862, in the midst of a blinding snow-storm, and Loreta had taken the place of a friend, and was on picket duty in the trenches. The cold was so intense that after a few hours of waiting in the darkness she felt as if she must lie down in her frozen garments and die. But with a great effort she conquered her drowsiness, and held on, till in the morning the men on night duty were relieved, and she crawled back to shelter for food and sleep.

For four days and nights the battle continued, and at first the advantage was on the side of the Confederates. But at length the entrenchments were stormed by the Federals, and it was plain to all that the fort must be given up. In the end the besieged and besiegers fought hand to hand, but every hour the garrison grew fewer, and when as many men as could be saved were embarked in the boats at night, General Buckner surrendered the fort to General Grant.

It was during a skirmish fought about this time that Loreta received a wound in the foot, and, much against her will, was obliged to have it treated by the surgeon of the regiment. The dread of the discovery of her sex was always strong upon her, and, of course, a doctor was more likely to see through her disguise than anybody else, and after one visit from him she made up her mind that he should not pay another. So, after resting for a day or two, she slipped quietly away and went into hiding for a little while, and then travelled straight to New Orleans, only to find that she had deliberately walked into a hotbed of suspicion.

About nine months had now passed since Loreta Velazquez first put on men's clothes and turned into Lieutenant Harry Buford, and, considering the amount of fighting she had done, it was not wonderful that the arrangement of wire shields that she wore to disguise her figure had become 'badly out of shape.' The marvel

is that it had not gone to pieces long before. She had also grown so used to passing as a man and being taken for one that she neglected all kinds of little things about which she had been very particular in the beginning, with the result that the New Orleans people soon began to ask questions, and very shortly she was arrested as a spy.

Angry and dismayed as Loreta felt, she did not lose her presence of mind, and boldly told the officer that he could not prove his charge and would only get himself into trouble. Her words appeared to have no other effect than to make the man uncomfortable, and, in spite of all her protests, he informed Loreta that he must do his duty and bring her before the Provost-Marshal. However, while they were on the way he seems to have altered his mind, and after questioning his prisoner about her military life, offered to release her on the spot. Loreta was too prudent to take this chance; she answered proudly that, as she was quite innocent of the accusation brought against her, she was ready to be examined by anybody, and in silence they walked through the streets till they entered the office of the Provost-Marshal. Encouraged by her previous success, Loreta answered the Provost-Marshal's questions with such an air of truth that in a few minutes after her entrance he had signed the order for her freedom. Notwithstanding that she had regained her liberty, Loreta did not feel easy, and determined to leave New Orleans at the first opportunity; but before she could manage to do so she was again put under arrest, this time under the charge of being a woman, and was brought before the Mayor, to whom in the end she acknowledged the truth in a private interview.

After an imprisonment of ten days and a fine of ten dollars, she was again released without her secret having been made public. She next enlisted in the 21st Louisiana Regiment, but, not liking the restraint,

shortly after had herself transferred to the Army of East Tennessee. It is rather curious that though Loreta speaks of the 'rigid discipline of the army,' she 'managed to sustain herself as an independent without any difficulty'—at least, according to her own story. But a bad wound in the shoulder from a shell which burst while she and some other soldiers were burying their dead comrades brought about the disclosure she had been so anxious to avoid. The ride of fifteen miles back to camp when suffering agonies of pain proved too great a shock for her nerves to bear, and, when on her way to the nearest hospital the train she had been placed in stopped for two hours at a small town, she summoned a young surgeon whom she knew well and 'told him her real name,' to the great astonishment of the young doctor, who had heard many stories of his patient's courage in the field. Aided by him she was able, when her shoulder was partially healed, to push on to deliver some despatches which had been entrusted to her, and then to proceed to Indianapolis and try, as were her orders, to gain admittance into the camp containing a number of Confederate prisoners. If she succeeded in this she was to urge them to escape if possible, as no attempt at their rescue could unhappily be made.

For once Loreta was at a loss for a plan to get into the camp; she was still feeling ill and depressed, and all her invention seemed to have left her. She had now put on woman's dress and had given up the idea of wearing a man's disguise any more, and it chanced that on this occasion she contrived to accomplish in petticoats what she never could have done in trousers. While wandering near the camp she met a cake-woman who was evidently going to enter the enclosure for the purpose of selling her wares to the prisoners.

'Ah! I think I see my way,' thought Loreta, and she stopped the woman and asked to be allowed to buy some of her cakes. As she was turning them over to decide

which looked the nicest, she asked carelessly, 'Are you actually going to see those dirty rebels in prison?'

'Yes,' answered the woman; 'they are fond of cakes, and generally buy all I've got.'

'But I heard that no one was allowed in.'

'No; but they all know me, and the sergeant just looks through the basket to make sure I'm not carrying papers or anything that is forbidden.'

'Dear me!' said Loreta; 'I should like to go in myself; I'm curious to know what sort of people these rebels are. Do you think I might?'

'Oh, yes! Come along with me and I'll get you in,' replied the woman, laughing, and, addressing the sergeant who was waiting at the gate to examine the basket, she said, 'Sergeant, this is my sister. She came with me to see how the rebels look, as she has never beheld one.'

'Well, go in there; you will find plenty,' answered the sergeant with a chuckle, and they both passed through the gate.

The cake-woman was soon surrounded, and Loreta glanced about her to see if there was anyone whom she knew, as she did not wish to give more explanations than were necessary. She was relieved to recognise a major who had served with General Lee's army in the South, and, as no one was watching them, she approached him and hurriedly told him who she was—for he had only known her as a man—and the message she had brought. She also informed him of the plan of operations which the Confederate generals had decided on, and the road which the prisoners would do well to follow. She then rejoined the old woman and with her left the camp, saying, with a nod and smile to the sergeant, that she had done what she came for.

Henceforth she went about seeking work in her true character of 'a poor widow whose husband had been killed in the war'; but she still considered herself a spy in the Confederate service, and lost no chance of stealing

papers or getting information, which she sent to headquarters as soon as she could manage it. Once, when employed in packing cartridges in a Federal arsenal where many women worked, she had serious thoughts of blowing up the arsenal, and was only prevented from doing so by her repugnance to killing so many people in cold blood, though she would never have thought twice of shooting them in battle. But the temptation was so strong that she could not trust herself to resist it, and after a fortnight she left abruptly and applied for a place as chambermaid in an hotel at St. Louis where some Federal officers were quartered. While there she contrived to steal some important papers, which she duly sent to the Confederate camp. Before the war was over she was to be found on board one of the boats employed to run blockades, where we must leave her. It is strange to think that by the time that peace was made she was still only twenty-two—just a girl beginning life as far as years went. Her fame spread throughout the North as well as the South, and she obtained three husbands and became the mother of four children. But her energy and restlessness never forsook her, and after two visits to Europe and South America, and some time spent with the Mormons, she is to be heard of as a miner on the slopes of the Pacific Coast, where the man's dress in which she probably worked must have recalled the days of her youth when she wore it so happily.

Is she alive now? one wonders. It is quite possible, for she would only be sixty-nine. But her life by her own choice was a hard one, and may have worn her out before her time.

Author's Note.—All the kind efforts of Professor Brander Matthews to procure for me in the United States an original copy of Loreta Velazquez' book having proved abortive, I have been forced to rely on the portions reprinted in 'Women Adventurers,' by Mrs. Henry Norman, to whom I make this acknowledgment.

THE FARMER'S DREAM.

LET us call the following curious tale 'The Farmer's Dream.' The story is told in various ways, with differences of all sorts. Once I was at a dinner party at a club, where many men told strange stories like this, and other men declared that the things never happened at all. Two or three different versions of the Farmer's Dream were told, and one or two men had old uncles who remembered the affair. But they did not agree as to the part of the country in which the events happened : it was really in Devonshire.

One evening early in the September of a year that is long enough ago, in fact on the ninth of September, a farmer named Mr. Brown was standing in the harvest-field while the corn was being put on to the wains and carried to the stackyard. There came up to him a poor man named William Brodie, who did not belong to the parish, and tramped about looking for any rough work that he could find to do. He was an honest man as far as anyone knew, but Mr. Brown's harvest was over and he had no job to give Brodie. Still, as Brodie was very poor—more than common poor at the moment—Mr. Brown wrote down in his pocket-book the name of the village where Brodie was living and promised to let him know if ever he heard of a job of work for the poor fellow.

As usually happens, Mr. Brown did not hear of any piece of work, and he forgot all about William Brodie.

But about six months later, say in March or April, Mr. Brown awakened his wife one night and told her that he was very much puzzled. He had dreamed the same dream three times running, but he could not remember, like Nebuchadnezzar in the Bible, what his dream was about. But each time when he awoke he had heard a voice calling aloud, 'Go to Bodmin!' Bodmin, a town in Cornwall, was thirty miles away from the farm of Mr. Brown; he had never been at the place in his life, but he felt that to Bodmin he must ride, though Mrs. Brown laughed at him for being so silly.

So Mr. Brown rose at three o'clock in the morning, put his pocket-book in his pocket, and rode to a ferry over a river, where he hoped to catch a coach that ran from Exeter to Falmouth. He found the ferryman on his side of the river, which saved time. The ferryman said he had heard the farmer call him when he was on the further bank, 'and I knew that something important must have brought you here so early, and I came back for you.'

Now the farmer had not called; and knowing that, he more and more felt that there must be great need of him at Bodmin, as invisible tongues were calling to him and the ferryman. He seems not to have caught the coach, and he did not reach Bodmin till after noon. He went to an inn and put up his horse, and saw that it was well rubbed down and fed. Then he noticed that the town was full of strangers, who had come to see a man tried for a murder. Farmer Brown dined on roast beef and home-brewed ale at his inn, being very hungry, for he had had no breakfast. Next he smoked a pipe, and then he walked into the Court House. He found that the man accused of murdering somebody had been found guilty by the jury of killing and robbing a man on the ninth of last September.

The Judge, before passing sentence of death, was

saying, 'Prisoner, have you anything to offer in your defence?'

The prisoner, though the farmer did not notice it, was poor William Brodie, who had asked him for a job of work six months before, at the end of harvest. Now the odd thing is that the ninth of September was the very day when the farmer had met the prisoner in his own harvest-field. Perhaps it is as odd that the farmer had not only forgotten the meeting, but did not remember William Brodie, or perhaps did not see him distinctly. So Mr. Brown asked a neighbour in Court who the murdered man was. The neighbour whispered that he was a land-agent near Truro, who had been collecting rents, and was found murdered in a lane; his money and his coat had both been stolen. But a constable had seen a tramp wearing the coat, and in the pocket of the coat was the dead man's pocket-book with some money in it. The prisoner could only say that he had been tramping in search of work, and had found the dead man's coat, money and all, in a little wood. This did not seem probable, but when the prisoner was asked by the Judge what he had to say for himself, he only repeated the story of having found the coat and the money in a wood. Then he looked stupidly round the Court, noticed Mr. Brown, and said in a dull kind of way, 'There is a gentleman who knows me, and knows that I am an honest man.'

Then the Judge asked Mr. Brown to go into the witness-box and say what he knew. He could only answer that he did know William Brodie, and never heard any harm of him.

'When did you see him last, Mr. Brown?' asked the Judge.

'In autumn last year, when he came to me to give him work . . . but, my Lord, I believe I wrote the date down in my pocket-book.'

Then Mr. Brown took out his great black pocket-book,

full of notes of his business in selling and buying horses and sheep. He turned over the pages clumsily, and nobody paid much attention. But suddenly the farmer found his note: 'Met William Brodie. Remember to let him know if I find any work for him. September 9.'

'September 9!' exclaimed the Judge. 'Why, that was the day of the murder. Where did you say that you live, Mr. Brown?'

Mr. Brown gave the information, and as his farm was forty miles from the place where the murder was committed, it was perfectly clear and certain that Brodie was not the murderer.

There were people in Court who knew Mr. Brown, and could speak to his character. So, on hearing this new evidence, the Jury gave poor William a verdict of Not Guilty.

Such is the story of the dream of Farmer Brown which saved the life of William Brodie.

But you will ask, as everyone did ask, How did the dead man's coat and pocket-book and money come to be lying in the wood where William found them? This is the riddle that nobody can answer, for if the land-agent was not murdered for his money, why was he murdered?

It seems possible that, as there were only three or four pieces of gold and some silver in the pocket-book, while the land-agent may have had a hundred pounds or more, the murderer hid the coat and the little money in the wood to make the whole affair more mysterious, while he kept most of the plunder. If his object was to make a mystery, he certainly succeeded. But what the voice was that called to Farmer Brown and also to the ferryman is a puzzle that nobody can solve.

THE SWORD OF D'ARTAGNAN

ON a fine spring morning when Louis XIII. was King of France, a young man of eighteen stood listening to some parting words from his father in an old castle not far from the Pyrenees. He was leaving home for the first time, in order to seek his fortune in Paris, and in his own opinion had little need of any counsel to guide him through life. To only one piece of advice did he pay any heed, but this he laid to heart, and largely it profited him.

'Put up with nothing from any man save the King and the Cardinal,' said old Monsieur d'Artagnan,' and as the youth was never tempted to 'put up' with anything, he felt that his father was wiser than he thought.

The young man, who in our days would be considered a mere boy, had a thin brown face, with a large nose and a firm chin. He wore a faded blue doublet and a small cap with a feather stuck in it, while a sword hung from his leather belt. Fifteen crowns were all his fortune, unless we count a lean yellow horse which walked with its head bowed to its knees, and—more precious than either—a letter in his pocket from his father to Monsieur de Tréville, Captain of the King's Musketeers, an old neighbour and comrade of the elder d'Artagnan himself.

If the horse appeared rough and ill-groomed when it left home, its condition was still worse when young d'Artagnan pulled up before a little inn near to Paris

three weeks later. At a window stood a gentleman more than twenty years older than the youth, and his rude remarks about the horse roused d'Artagnan's anger—never a very difficult matter.

'Ah, you sir, hiding behind the hangings,' cried the traveller loudly, 'tell me what you are laughing at, so that I can enjoy the joke too.'

At the sound of his voice the gentleman turned his eyes slowly and gazed at him with surprise. Then he answered coldly and contemptuously :

'I was not addressing you, sir.'

'But I am addressing *you*,' exclaimed d'Artagnan, who was growing more irritated every moment. This time the gentleman did not answer at all, but left the room and came to where the young man was still sitting on his horse.

'The animal must certainly have begun life as a gold button,' he said to someone whom d'Artagnan could not see, taking no more notice of the young man than if he did not exist; 'its colour is very common in flowers, but hitherto has been rare among horses.'

'He who laughs at the horse, laughs at the master,' shouted d'Artagnan, beside himself with rage.

'I laugh but seldom, sir,' answered the stranger, 'as you can see by my face. Still, I wish to keep the privilege of doing so when the spirit moves me.'

'And I,' cried d'Artagnan, 'do not intend that anyone shall laugh against my will.'

'Really, sir,' observed the stranger. 'Oh, well, you are quite right of course,' and he turned to enter the inn, when d'Artagnan stopped him.

'I will strike you in your back if you do not show me your face,' he exclaimed, springing to the ground.

'Strike me!' answered the other, this time truly astonished. 'Oh, don't be absurd.' But d'Artagnan made such a furious lunge at him that if he had not leaped backwards his last moment would speedily have

come. However, he saw that the affair was serious, so, drawing his sword, he bowed to his enemy and put himself on guard. At this instant the landlord with two of the stranger's friends threw themselves on the young man, and dragged him off with a shower of blows, while the gentleman sheathed his sword, and murmured, 'What a pest these Gascons are. Put him on his orange horse and let him go.'

'Not before I have killed you, you coward !' cried d'Artagnan, wrenching himself free ; and though bloody with wounds, he continued to fight till his sword broke in two, and he fell down nearly fainting. As he was unable to move, the landlord, assisted by two of his men, picked him up and carried him to the kitchen, where they bound up his sores.

'Well, how is that young madman ?' asked the stranger when the landlord at length returned.

'Better, sir ; he is conscious again now. But before he fainted right off he called out to challenge you afresh, declaring that you would repent bitterly of your conduct.'

'Who is he ?' inquired the stranger. 'He gives himself the airs of a prince.'

'He is poor enough,' replied the man, 'for we searched his wallet and only found one shirt and twelve crowns. Oh, I forgot ; he called out in a fury that you should see what Monsieur de Tréville would think of this insult to his protégé.'

'Monsieur de Tréville ! Look here, my good fellow, while he was unconscious did you search his pockets ? Yes ? And what did you find there ?'

'A letter addressed to Monsieur de Tréville, Captain of the Musketeers.'

This news did not seem to please the stranger, and he was silent. After a pause he inquired where the wounded man was lying.

'We took off his clothes, which were soaked in blood, and carried him up to my wife's room.'

'And you left the things in the kitchen,' remarked the stranger carelessly. 'Well, make out my bill, and tell my lackey that I am ready to start. I see my horse is at the door. And Milady is sure to arrive very shortly.'

'Can he be afraid of that young man?' said the landlord to himself as he left the room.

Meanwhile d'Artagnan had recovered himself a little, and, in spite of his bandages, determined to dress himself and continue his journey. On the arm of the landlord, who was no less anxious to get rid of him than he was to go, he managed to get downstairs; but as soon as he reached the kitchen he perceived through the great door his enemy talking to a lovely lady who was leaning her head through the window of a heavy carriage drawn by two strong Normandy horses. Neither of them noticed the young man, who, burning to revenge himself, drew a step nearer, and hid himself close to the door, where he could hear all that passed.

'The Cardinal bids you start at once for England, and to send him word if the Duke should leave London,' said the stranger. 'Your orders are in this box, which you are not to open till you are on the other side of the Channel.'

'I understand. And you?'

'Oh, I return to Paris at once.'

'Without chastising that insolent little boy?' asked the lady.

The stranger was about to reply, when d'Artagnan leaped forward.

'It is the insolent little boy who chastises others,' cried he, and the stranger was about to draw his sword when the lady put her hand on his arm. 'The least delay may be our ruin,' she said. 'Go quickly.'

'You are right,' answered the gentleman, and

without more words he mounted his horse and took the road to Paris without waiting to pay his bill, in spite of the indignant shouts the landlord sent after him, while the lady continued her way in the opposite direction.

The next day d'Artagnan, being partly recovered, prepared to follow him, but in feeling for his purse he found that the letter to Monsieur de Tréville had disappeared. Twenty times he emptied his pockets, thinking that somehow he had overlooked it, but when at last he was convinced that it really was gone he was seized with such a fit of rage that the landlord fully expected that he would end by fainting for the third time—if, indeed, he did not go mad and break all the furniture !

'My letter ! my letter !' shrieked the young man as soon as he could speak. 'That letter, I tell you, was for Monsieur de Tréville, and *he* will know how to find it.'

This threat frightened the landlord, for after the King and Cardinal Richelieu there was no one in the kingdom so much feared as Monsieur de Tréville. Therefore he began to search for the letter in all kinds of impossible places.

'Was there anything particular in it ?' he asked, when he had failed to discover it.

'Anything particular ?' repeated the Gascon, who had relied upon the letter to obtain for him a footing at Court ; 'why, it contained my whole fortune !'

At these words a ray of light suddenly flashed across the gloomy face of the landlord.

'I know,' he exclaimed ; 'it was stolen from you by the gentleman who was here yesterday. I will wager a cask of my best wine that it was he.'

'Do you think so ?' answered d'Artagnan doubtfully, for though the letter was of the highest im-

portance to himself, he did not see that it could be of any value to another man.

'I am quite sure,' replied the landlord, 'for I noticed that when I mentioned that in taking off your bloody doublet I had found a letter in your pocket for Monsieur de Tréville, he grew very uneasy, and made an excuse for sending me out of the way.'

'You are right,' replied d'Artagnan; 'well, I shall complain to Monsieur de Tréville, and Monsieur de Tréville will complain to the King.' Then he held out two crowns to the landlord, who accompanied him to the door, hat in hand. He mounted his yellow horse, and arrived without further accident at the Porte Saint-Antoine of Paris. Here he sold the animal for three crowns to a stable-keeper who had fallen in love with its strange colour.

The first thing to be done was to look for a lodging, and very soon he had found a small garret in the Street of the Gravediggers that he thought would suit him. Next he opened the packet which he carried under his arm, and passed the rest of the day in sewing on to his doublet some gay gold lace which his mother had secretly cut off a new coat of his father's. This done he went out to get a fresh blade put to his sword, and crossed the river by the bridge built by the King's father, Henri IV., and walked down to the Louvre to find where Monsieur de Tréville lived.

'In the Street of the old Dovecots, close to the Luxembourg Palace, on the other side of the Seine,' a musketeer informed him; and with a feeling of pride at being such a near neighbour of the great man, d'Artagnan returned to his garret, and fell asleep full of hope.

The courtyard of Monsieur de Tréville's house had more the air of a camp than the dwelling of a private gentleman when d'Artagnan entered it the next morning. Fifty or sixty musketeers fully armed and ready to pick a quarrel with the first comer were standing

about in groups, laughing and talking—sometimes quarrelling.

Down the wide staircase an endless succession of people were passing, bearing messages, asking favours, proclaiming grievances, while in the antechamber those who had the honour of an appointment with the famous Captain of the Musketeers sat round on benches, each hoping to be the next summoned to Monsieur de Tréville's private room.

This was the scene on which d'Artagnan entered, and, bold Gascon as he was, for the first time in his life he felt embarrassed and shy as the young men turned and gazed after him. However, he threaded his way through the groups with the best grace he could muster, and reached the foot of the staircase, where he paused, amazed at the sight before him. Here four musketeers were apparently playing at taking a fort, for three of them were charging upstairs, trying to pass a fourth who stood on the top step, while a dozen of their comrades waited on the landing till their turn should come. Watching with admiration the quickness of the sword play, d'Artagnan took for granted that the weapons were foils with buttons at the ends to prevent their inflicting wounds, but from the blood that flowed from scratches on the faces and hands of the combatants he speedily discovered that they were fighting with the same swords that they would use in battle, and that, with every scratch, shouts of laughter burst from them all.

At length it was over; the hero on the top step had marked all his enemies without once being touched himself. The staircase was free, and d'Artagnan passed up it and into the antechamber, where a lackey approached and inquired his business.

With a humility which rather astonished himself d'Artagnan told his name, and added that he was a countryman of Monsieur de Tréville, and that he had

ridden all the way from Gascony hoping for the favour of an audience.

The lackey replied that no doubt Monsieur de Tréville would grant him one, but the newcomer would probably have to wait some time, as his Excellency was at present engaged on very special business. So the young man sat down on the corner of a bench and used his eyes and ears as he very well knew how to do.

In the middle of a lively group was a very tall and stout musketeer, dressed in a light blue doublet and a crimson velvet cloak, with a magnificent belt covered with gold, from which hung a huge rapier. Plainly the gold belt excited the envy of his companions, and of none more than d'Artagnan, but the musketeer accepted all the compliments offered him with a show of indifference.

'Oh, it is well enough,' he said, shrugging his shoulders; 'a silly fashion of course, but as it *is* the fashion, one must not make oneself remarkable by going against it. Besides, one must spend one's father's money on something.'

'Come, Porthos,' cried a voice from the crowd, 'you don't expect us to believe that it was given you by your father. We know better.'

'On my honour I bought it myself, didn't I, Aramis?' replied Porthos, turning to a young man of twenty-two with the soft, dark eyes and complexion of a girl, who smiled and nodded.

'Monsieur de Tréville awaits Monsieur d'Artagnan,' interrupted the lackey, and in the midst of the silence that fell upon the whole antechamber the young Gascon with a beating heart passed into the cabinet of the Captain of the Musketeers.

Although Monsieur de Tréville was at that moment in a very bad temper, he smiled on hearing the accent of his native province as d'Artagnan, with a low bow, stammered out a few words of thanks. Then, signing

to him to sit down till he should have finished his business, he called three times in a loud voice :

‘Athos ! Porthos ! Aramis !’

The two young men in the anteroom hastened quickly into the cabinet, shutting the door behind them, and stood with a calm dignity, which filled d’Artagnan with admiration, till Monsieur de Tréville should begin what he had to say. Apparently he did not find it easy. He walked up and down the room twice or thrice in silence ; then he stopped in front of them and asked in an angry tone :

‘Do you know, gentlemen, what the King said to me only last night ? Can you guess ?’

‘No, sir,’ replied the two musketeers after an instant’s hesitation. ‘No, sir, we cannot.’

‘He said that for the future he should recruit his musketeers from the guards of the Cardinal.’

‘From the guards of the Cardinal !’ repeated Porthos, ‘and why ?’

‘Oh, he was quite right,’ exclaimed Monsieur de Tréville, who was growing more angry every moment, ‘for, on my honour, the musketeers cut but a poor figure at Court. Last night at the King’s card-table his Eminence, watching me with his tiger-cat’s eyes, told a story of how a party of musketeers had made a row in a tavern, and that his guards had been obliged to arrest them. Arrest the musketeers ! You were there, you two. Oh, don’t deny it ! You were recognised ; the Cardinal said so. And it is my fault of course for having chosen such men ! What was the use, Aramis, of asking me for a helmet when you know you are going to become a priest ? And why, Porthos, do you wear a golden sword belt if your sword itself is made of straw ? By the way, I don’t see Athos. Where is Athos ?’

‘He is ill, sir,’ answered Aramis, ‘very ill.’

‘Ill ? What is the matter with him ? But why

should I ask? He is wounded no doubt; perhaps killed. Ah, I was sure of it. Now listen to me, gentlemen. I will not have the musketeers make themselves a laughing-stock of the Cardinal's guards, quiet, worthy people, who would never suffer themselves to be arrested. *They* would rather die on the spot. It is only the King's musketeers who run away and hide.'

Porthos and Aramis stood trembling with rage. They would willingly have strangled Monsieur de Tréville, for they did not guess that his wrath was really meant for the Cardinal. But when Tréville, who had paused for breath, declared that he would send in his resignation as Captain of the Musketeers, and beg for a lieutenancy in the Cardinal's guards, Porthos could contain himself no longer.

'Well, sir,' cried he, 'if you want to know the truth it is this. We were six against six, only they fell on us treacherously, and before we could draw our swords two of us were killed and Athos badly wounded. Twice he tried to rise and twice he sank back. And it is false that we surrendered. We were taken by force, and managed to escape as they were marching us along. As for Athos, they thought he was dead, and left him on the field of battle.'

'And I had the pleasure of killing one with his own sword, as mine was broken,' added Aramis gently.

'I did not know that,' answered Monsieur de Tréville more calmly. 'I see that the Cardinal has exaggerated.' As he spoke the curtain over the doorway was lifted, and a young man entered; he was tall and handsome, but ghastly white.

'Athos!' they cried.

'You sent for me, sir,' said Athos, in a very weak but steady voice.

At the sight of him, evidently hardly able to stand, Tréville's anger melted.

'I was just telling these gentlemen that I forbid my musketeers to run needless risks, for the corps is very dear to the King, who knows that they are the bravest of all his subjects. Your hand, Athos,' but as he stretched out his own, Athos, exhausted by the effort he had made, fell fainting on the floor.

In an instant all was confusion; a doctor was summoned with all haste, and under his orders Porthos and Aramis carried the wounded man into another room. The crowd of musketeers who had poured in from the antechamber quickly dispersed, and at length d'Artagnan found himself alone with Monsieur de Tréville.

'Pardon me,' said de Tréville, smiling. 'My dear fellow-countryman, I had forgotten all about you. But a captain is nothing but the father of a big family. Soldiers are only children; but as I am anxious that the orders of the King, and especially those of his Eminence the Cardinal, should be executed . . .' but a slight smile on d'Artagnan's face prevented him from finishing his sentence.

'I have the greatest respect for your father,' he continued hastily; 'what can I do for his son?'

'Ah, sir,' answered d'Artagnan, 'it was because I counted on that friendship that I came across France to beg you to enrol me among your musketeers. But after all I have seen and heard during the last two hours I understand better what an immense favour I am asking, and how little I deserve it.'

'You are right as to its being a favour, young man,' replied Monsieur de Tréville. 'But I do not feel sure that you are unworthy of it, and it is with great regret that I must tell you that the King has lately decided no one shall be admitted into the corps who has not served in at least two campaigns, or has drawn attention on himself by brilliant feats of arms.'

D'Artagnan bowed silently. He was more anxious than ever to become a musketeer now that he found it was so difficult.

'There is one thing I can do for you, however,' went on Monsieur de Tréville. 'Oh, I don't mean to offer you money,' he added with a smile, as the young man coloured and drew himself up, 'but I can give you free admittance into the Royal Academy, where you will be trained in the art of horsemanship and make friends who will be useful to you through life. And I shall hope to see you in my house and to hear how you are getting on.'

The offer was a good one, yet the young man was disappointed.

'Ah, sir,' he said sadly, 'I see how much I have lost in losing the letter my father wrote to you.'

'Well, to confess the truth,' replied Tréville, 'I *was* rather surprised that you should come so far without providing yourself with something of the sort.'

'The last thing before my departure my father gave me a letter of recommendation, but it was stolen from me when I was wounded at Meung,' and at a sign from Tréville he related his adventure.

'What was the man like with whom you fought? Was he tall and dark, with a scar across his cheek?' asked the Captain.

'Yes; and very pale.'

'And he was expecting a lady?'

'Yes, an Englishwoman, to whom he gave a box, bidding her not to open it till she reached London.'

'It is he,' murmured Tréville, 'but I thought he was in Brussels.'

'Oh, sir,' cried d'Artagnan, 'if you know who he is, tell me where I can find him. Above all things I long for vengeance.'

'Beware of any such thing,' exclaimed Tréville.

'On the contrary, if you see him on one side of the street cross to the other. Don't dash yourself to pieces against such a rock.'

'It is not that which would stop me,' replied d'Artagnan proudly, 'if ever I should be lucky enough to find him'; and Tréville, a Gascon himself, knew that it was true.

'Then I will write you the letter for the Director of the Academy,' he said, changing the conversation, and while he was doing so d'Artagnan withdrew to the window looking out upon the courtyard.

'Here it is,' said Tréville after a few minutes, and without turning, d'Artagnan stretched out his hand, when suddenly he gave a cry :

'Ah, this time he sha'n't escape me.'

'Who?' asked Monsieur de Tréville.

'My thief. Ah, traitor!' and he rushed from the room.

In three bounds he was across the landing and was about to dash down the staircase when he ran right into a musketeer, who uttered a groan of pain.

'Excuse me,' said d'Artagnan, without stopping, 'I am in a great hurry,' and was continuing his headlong course when he was seized by a wrist of iron.

'You are in a hurry, are you?' exclaimed the musketeer, pale as a corpse, 'and you think that is a reason for running into me like this? Because you heard Monsieur de Tréville speak to us a little roughly to-day, you imagine that *you* can behave in such a fashion. *You* are not Monsieur de Tréville.'

'It seems to me,' replied d'Artagnan, who now recognised Athos, 'that if one makes an apology it ought to be accepted. But I am not going to take a lesson in manners from you.'

'We shall see,' answered Athos; 'you will find me at noon at the Carmes-Deschaux.'

'I will be there,' said d'Artagnan, flying down the stairs as if he had wings.

Outside the street door stood Porthos, talking to a soldier. There was just enough room between them to allow a man to pass—at least d'Artagnan thought so. But a gust of wind arose at that instant and blew Porthos' cloak right over d'Artagnan's head. When he succeeded in freeing himself he perceived that the magnificent sword-belt was gold in front only; the back was of plain leather.

'Oh, oh!' cried Porthos, staggering, big as he was, from the suddenness of the shock, 'are you mad to knock against people in this way?'

'Excuse me,' answered d'Artagnan, shaking off the last fold, which was twisted round his arm, 'but I am in a great hurry. I am running after somebody.'

'Do you always forget your eyes when you run?' asked Porthos.

'No,' replied d'Artagnan, irritated by his tone, 'I sometimes see what is hidden from others.'

Porthos understood that he alluded to the back of his sword belt, and leaped furiously towards d'Artagnan.

'By and bye—by and bye'—answered the young Gascon, laughing, 'when you are not wearing your mantle.'

'At one o'clock, then, behind the Luxembourg.'

'At one o'clock,' shouted d'Artagnan over his shoulder, as he turned the corner of the street.

But the man he was following had disappeared completely, and though d'Artagnan made inquiries of everyone he met, no one had seen him. At length he gave up the chase, and began to think over the events of the morning, when it occurred to him that his manner of leaving Monsieur de Tréville had been somewhat rude, and that Athos, at any rate, had cause to complain. As to Porthos and at the remembrance of the scene, he laughed afresh.

He was walking slowly along, resolved to behave more politely in the future, when he came upon Aramis talking to some friends; carrying out his good resolutions, d'Artagnan smiled and bowed, but Aramis, still sore from Tréville's hard words, only gave him a cold nod. The Gascon was passing on when he noticed that Aramis had dropped his handkerchief, and picking it up held it out to him. The musketeer blushed violently, and snatched it out of his hands, but not before the other young men had detected some delicate embroidery in one corner.

'Ah, my friend, what beautiful damsel has given you that?' cried they. Aramis grew redder than before, but his companions continued to tease him. D'Artagnan saw that Aramis did not like being laughed at, but made matters worse by trying to apologise. Aramis turned upon him in a rage, and requested him not to meddle with things that were not his concern. This was enough for d'Artagnan, who answered hotly, and bade the musketeer draw his sword and defend himself. The challenge recalled Aramis to a sense of his position, and he resumed his usual courteous manner.

'We cannot fight here under the window of this house, which is filled with men of the Cardinal's party. Oh, I am quite anxious to kill you, don't be afraid, but I wish to kill you quietly in some secluded place.'

'Don't make too sure,' answered d'Artagnan, 'but where shall we meet?'

'Wait for me at two, at Monsieur de Tréville's, and I will tell you.'

The young men then bowed to each other, and d'Artagnan finding that the hour was growing late, set out for the Carmes-Deschaux, saying to himself as he went, 'Well, I shall certainly be killed, but at least I shall be killed by a musketeer.'

When he reached the appointed spot, Athos was

sitting on a bank looking as calm as ever, though his wound was very painful. He rose at the sight of d'Artagnan, who bowed almost to the ground, and informed the Gascon that he expected his seconds every minute.

'I have none myself,' replied d'Artagnan, 'for I only arrived yesterday, and know no one in Paris except Monsieur de Tréville.'

'But we can't fight like that!' said Athos, perplexed. 'I should be taking a mean advantage of you.'

'I am afraid you are suffering much from your wound,' remarked d'Artagnan.

'I am, indeed, and the knock you gave me this morning reopened it.'

'I have some ointment which my mother gave me—wonderful for healing wounds—and if you would do me the honour to use it, in three days you would be quite cured, and we could fight then.'

'Ah, I like men of your sort,' exclaimed Athos, 'you carry me back to the brave and courteous knights of the time of Charlemagne, on whom we should all model ourselves. I am sure that if neither of us is killed we shall become friends. Meanwhile we must await my seconds, as is proper. I think I see one of them.' And he was right, for in the distance appeared the gigantic form of Porthos.

'Porthos!' cried d'Artagnan.

'Yes, do you object? And here is the other.'

D'Artagnan turned quickly, and beheld Aramis.

'M. Aramis,' he gasped, more astonished than before. Athos smiled.

'You will soon learn that one of us is rarely seen without the other two. They call us the inseparables.'

By this time Porthos had come up and stared with amazement at d'Artagnan.

'This is the gentleman I am to fight with,' said Athos.

'But I am fighting with him also,' exclaimed Porthos.

'At one o'clock,' replied d'Artagnan.

'I too have a duel with him,' said Aramis.

'At two,' answered d'Artagnan. And there was a slight pause.

'Why are you fighting him, Athos?' asked Porthos.

'I really don't quite know; he hurt my shoulder. And you, Porthos?'

'Because I like it,' answered Porthos, reddening, and Athos perceived a twinkle in d'Artagnan's eyes.

'We had a discussion on dress,' said he.

'And you, Aramis?' inquired Athos.

'We differed slightly in our views on a certain subject,' replied he, and again Athos detected an expression of amusement on the Gascon's face.

'I have to apologise to all of you,' said d'Artagnan, 'for not being able in all probability to pay the debts I have incurred. M. Athos has the right to kill me first, which seriously interferes with your chances, M. Porthos, and renders yours practically null, M. Aramis. And now, on guard!'

But hardly had Athos and d'Artagnan fallen into position when a company of the Cardinal's troops came round the corner.

'Your swords in the scabbards, quick!' cried Porthos and Aramis; but it was too late. The attitude of the combatants left no room for doubt, and the commander advanced towards them, followed by his men.

'How now, gentlemen?' he exclaimed. 'Fighting again! What about the king's edicts?'

'We should not interfere with you if *you* were fighting,' answered Athos. 'Leave us alone, I beg of you.'

'That is impossible,' replied Monsieur de Jussac, captain of the band. 'We must do our duty. Sheathe your swords, if you please, and come with us.'

'Sir,' said Aramis gravely, imitating Jussac, 'that is impossible. Monsieur de Tréville has forbidden it. Proceed on your way; it is the best thing you can do.'

His tone exasperated Jussac, who exclaimed angrily, 'If you don't obey at once we will charge.'

'They are five,' said Athos, 'and we are three. We shall be beaten again, and I must die where I stand,



THE DUEL BETWEEN ATHOS & D'ARTAGNAN INTERRUPTED

for I will never appear a second time defeated before our Captain.'

In a second d'Artagnan had made up his mind. He had to choose between the King and the Cardinal, and he chose the King. To fight he knew meant risking his life, since it was against the law, but he did not hesitate.

'Gentlemen,' he said, turning to the musketeers, 'you have counted wrong. We are not three, but four.'

'But you are not a musketeer,' cried Porthos.

'My heart is musketeer if my dress is not,' answered d'Artagnan; and the fight began.

D'Artagnan, the youngest and least experienced of the four, found himself opposite Jussac. The struggle was fierce, for Jussac was a practised swordsman; but he was bewildered by the Gascon's total disregard of all the rules of fencing, and by the quickness with which he darted round and seemed to be everywhere at once. At length Jussac lost temper and his head, and in a hand-to-hand fight that is always fatal. He resolved to disable his enemy with one desperate lunge, but d'Artagnan parried it, and before Jussac could right himself again his adversary slipped under his guard and passed his sword through his body. The captain sank heavily on the ground, disabled and unconscious. Victor in his fight, d'Artagnan threw anxious eye over the field of battle. Aramis had killed one of his foes, and was defending himself with skill against the other. Porthos and his opponent were well matched, and there was no sign of either giving way. Athos had been wounded afresh, but still stood his ground, and had merely changed his sword from his right hand to his left. D'Artagnan as he looked round caught a glance from Athos, and springing to his side cried to his adversary, 'On guard, for I am going to kill you!'

Cahusac turned, and Athos, whose courage alone had kept him on his feet, sank on one knee.

'Don't kill him,' he exclaimed, as with a blow from d'Artagnan, Cahusac's sword flew twenty feet from him. 'Don't kill him, I have some old scores to pay off.' Cahusac and d'Artagnan sprang after the weapon,

but the Gascon was there first. Foiled, Cahusac ran to seize the sword of the dead man slain by Aramis, and found himself confronted by Athos, who had nerved himself for a last effort. This time the combat was short ; in a few minutes Cahusac was stretched beside his comrade, and the others were forced to surrender. Then, drunk with joy, the four young men marched arm-in-arm to the house of Monsieur de Tréville.

And that was how the friendship began between d'Artagnan and the musketeers, which only ended with their lives.

THE BASTION SAINT-GERVAIS

WAR was raging at La Rochelle in the south. On one side were the French Protestants, or Huguenots, as they were called, supported by England, and on the other the French king and his army. D'Artagnan and his friends were of course in the thick of every fight and were as happy as it was possible for men to be.

D'Artagnan was on duty in the trenches, when he received a message from Athos begging him to come to his quarters as soon as possible. In an hour he was free, and started off, to find the three musketeers all assembled.

'I hope it is something very important,' said the Gascon as he entered, 'for otherwise I should have enjoyed a little sleep after passing the whole night in taking and dismantling a fort. Ah, what a pity you were not there! It was warm work.'

'It was not very cold where *we* were,' answered Porthos, twisting his moustache, but before he could say more Athos broke in hurriedly:

'Aramis, you breakfasted the other day at the inn of Parpaillot, didn't you?'

'Yes, and I got no fish, though it was a fast day.'

'Never mind that. Was it a quiet place, where nobody interfered with you?'

'Oh, if that is what you want, Parpaillot will suit you exactly.'

‘Let us go there at once, then,’ said Athos, rising. ‘These walls are nothing but paper.’

D’Artagnan was used to read his friend’s face, and understood at once that the matter was serious. He slipped his hand under Athos’ arm, and went out, Porthos and Aramis following.

On the way they met Grimaud, the faithful valet of Athos, who at a sign from his master turned behind them. Neither of them were great talkers, and mostly conversed by signs. Indeed, Grimaud had nearly forgotten how to speak at all.

It was seven o’clock when they reached the tavern of Parpaillot. They were shown into a room which the landlord assured them they would have to themselves, and ordered breakfast, but hardly were they seated when soldiers of all kinds began to pour in, much to the disgust of Athos.

‘We must be careful,’ he said in a low voice, ‘or we shall get mixed up in some quarrel, and that would be very awkward just now. D’Artagnan, tell us how you passed your night.’

‘I think,’ remarked a cavalry officer who was standing near, ‘that you were in the trenches. And didn’t you take a bastion?’

D’Artagnan hesitated a moment, not knowing if he was to reply, but a glance from Athos reassured him.

‘Yes,’ answered he, bowing, ‘we had that honour. As perhaps you heard, we placed a barrel of powder under a projection in the walls, which exploded, and made a very pretty breach. Indeed, the whole fort was rather damaged.’

‘What bastion was it?’ inquired a dragoon, who came in at this moment carrying a dead goose on the point of his sword for the landlord to cook.

‘The Bastion Saint-Gervais.’

‘And it was a hot affair?’

'I should think it was. We lost five men, and the Rochelais eight or ten.'

'But probably,' observed the cavalry officer, 'the first thing this morning they repaired the breach.'

'Probably,' answered d'Artagnan.

'Gentlemen,' cried Athos, 'a wager.'

'What about?' asked the cavalry officer, Monsieur de Busigny.

'Well,' said Athos, addressing him, 'I wager that I and my three friends will breakfast in the Bastion Saint-Gervais, and will hold it for an hour by my watch against all comers.'

Porthos and Aramis looked at each other; they began to understand, but d'Artagnan leaned forward and whispered to Athos, 'We shall all be killed to a certainty.'

'We shall be killed much more,' answered Athos, 'if we don't go.'

'Ah, that is something like a wager,' exclaimed Porthos, tilting back his chair.

'I take it,' replied Busigny. 'What stakes?'

'We are four and you are four,' said Athos. 'Let it be a dinner for eight on either side.'

'Very good,' rejoined Busigny.

'Your breakfast is ready, gentlemen,' interrupted the landlord.

'Bring it here,' said Athos, and when it was brought, Athos signed to Grimaud to fetch a big basket standing by the wall, and to wrap up the cold food in the napkins. Grimaud nodded. He grasped instantly that they were going to breakfast in the open air, and he quickly and silently rolled up the dishes, added some bottles of wine, and slung the basket over his arm.

'But where are you going to eat my breakfast?' asked the landlord.

'What does that matter to you if you are paid for it?' replied Athos, throwing two pistoles on the table.

'Do you want change?' inquired the landlord.

'No, just put in two bottles of champagne and you can keep the rest for the napkins.'

The landlord's countenance fell; he had expected a larger profit, but he avenged himself by slipping into the basket two bottles of light Anjou wine instead of the champagne ordered.

'Monsieur de Busigny,' said Athos, 'will you compare your watch with mine, or let me compare mine with yours? Ah, I see I am five minutes faster,' and bowing to the guests seated at table, the four young men went out, followed by Grimaud with the basket.

As long as they were within the lines of the camp none of them spoke, but when they got outside d'Artagnan, to whom all this was a mystery, thought it was time to seek an explanation.

'And now, my dear Athos, do me the favour of telling me what it all means.'

'You can see for yourself,' answered Athos; 'we are going to the bastion.'

'And what are we to do when we get there?'

'You know quite well; we are to eat our breakfast.'

'But why are we to eat it at the bastion?'

'Because we have some very important subjects to discuss, and we could not speak a word in that inn without someone overhearing us. Here, at any rate, and Athos pointed to the bastion, 'no one will trouble us.'

'It seems to me,' said d'Artagnan with the prudence that in a Gascon went naturally with extraordinary bravery, 'it seems to me that we might easily have found some secluded spot among the sand-hills, down by the sea.'

'Oh, they would have seen us all four together, and in a quarter of an hour the Cardinal would have known all about it.'

‘Yes,’ answered Aramis, ‘Athos is right.’

‘A desert would have done,’ said Porthos, ‘but there is none handy.’

‘There is no desert where a bird cannot fly overhead, or a fish jump out of the water, or a rabbit run out of his hole. And bird and rabbit and fish would all be spies of the Cardinal. But I defy anyone to guess the reason of our wager to breakfast in the bastion. We have pledged ourselves to remain there for an hour. That will give us plenty of time to talk, and we are quite certain of not being overheard. If they attack us, well, we can still discuss our affairs, and we shall have a chance besides of covering ourselves with glory. So that in any case we gain something.’

‘Yes, we shall most likely gain bullets inside us,’ remarked d’Artagnan.

‘My dear fellow,’ answered Athos, ‘you know as well as I do that the bullets most to be dreaded are not those of the enemy.’

‘But,’ put in Porthos, ‘it seems to me that for such an adventure we should have done better to bring our muskets.’

‘Ah, Porthos, you are nothing but an idiot after all. Why should we carry a useless burden?’

‘I don’t call a good musket, a dozen cartridges, and a powder flask “useless” when one has an enemy to face.’

‘Didn’t you hear what d’Artagnan said,’ asked Athos, ‘that in last night’s attack eight or ten Frenchmen were killed and as many Rochelais?’

‘Yes, I heard; but what of that?’

‘Well, our men were in a hurry, and had no time to rifle them, so we shall find their muskets, their powder flasks and their cartridges; and instead of four muskets and twelve balls, we shall have fifteen muskets and a hundred rounds to shoot.’

‘O Athos!’ cried Aramis, ‘you are a truly great

man,' and Porthos nodded. Only d'Artagnan did not seem convinced, and even Grimaud looked doubtful. Pulling his master by the coat, he pointed rapidly in various directions, as if to inquire where they were going. For answer, Athos in his turn pointed to the



bastion. Grimaud shook his head, and laid his hand on his heart in token that they would leave their bodies within the walls.

Athos in reply raised his hands and eyes to heaven.

Grimaud carefully put down his basket and seated himself on the ground.

Athos drew a pistol from his belt, looked to see that it was loaded, and held it to Grimaud's ear.

Grimaud suddenly stood on his legs, as if he had been touched by a spring, and at a sign from Athos picked up the basket and walked on, in front this time instead of behind.

When they reached the bastion, they all turned and looked towards the French camp, and distinguished, in a group apart, Monsieur de Busigny and his three friends with whom they had the wager. Then Athos took off his hat, and placed it on the point of his sword, which he waved.

The spectators answered by a loud shout, and the little party entered the fort.

As Athos had foretold, the bastion was only occupied by a dozen or so of dead men, French as well as Rochelais.

'Comrades,' said he, 'while Grimaud is laying the table, let us begin by collecting the muskets and cartridges, and then we can begin to talk. These gentlemen,' he added, pointing to the corpses, 'will not hear us.'

'We can throw them over the wall into the ditch,' observed Porthos, after having felt in all their pockets, and found nothing.

'You will do nothing of the sort,' replied Athos; 'we may find them very useful.'

'Useful! these dead men? You are crazy, my dear friend,' but Athos took no heed of him.

'How many muskets?' he asked.

'Twelve!' said Aramis.

'And how many rounds can we fire?'

'About a hundred.'

'That is quite enough. Now load,' and just as they had finished Grimaud signed that breakfast was ready, and then took up his post of observation in a small tower known as a pepper-pot, with a bottle of wine, two cutlets, and a roll for company.

'Sit down,' said Aramis, and they sat on the ground cross-legged, like Turks or tailors.

'Now that nobody can possibly overhear you,' exclaimed d'Artagnan, 'I hope you mean at last to tell us your wonderful secret.'

'For my part,' answered Athos, 'I hope to enable you to enjoy both pleasure and glory. We have had a delightful walk, you are about to eat an excellent breakfast, and below are five hundred people, as you can perceive through the loopholes, who consider us either mad men or heroes, two classes which bear a strong likeness to each other.'

'But the secret!' said d'Artagnan impatiently.

'The secret is,' replied Athos, 'that yesterday evening I saw Milady.'

'Where?' asked d'Artagnan.

'About five miles from here, at the inn of the Red Dove. By this time,' he added, glancing at his watch, 'she must have left France.'

'But after all,' inquired Porthos, 'who is this Milady?'

'A charming person,' answered Athos, tasting a glass of wine. 'Scoundrel of a landlord,' he exclaimed suddenly, 'he has given us that stuff from Anjou instead of champagne, and thought we shouldn't know the difference! Oh, yes, a charming person, who has somehow taken a dislike to our friend d'Artagnan; a month ago she did her best to have him shot, last week she tried to poison him, and only yesterday asked his head from the Cardinal.'

'My head from the Cardinal?' cried d'Artagnan, pale with terror.

'That,' said Porthos, 'is as true as the Gospel, for Aramis and I heard her with our own ears.'

'It is no use struggling against such powerful

enemies,' said d'Artagnan in despair. 'I might as well give it up and blow out my brains.'

'That would be the silliest thing you could do,' answered Athos, 'and the only one that cannot be remedied. But look at Grimaud! Something is happening! What is it, Grimaud? Considering the matter is important you may speak. Do you see anything?'

'A troop.'

'Of how many men?'

'Twenty.'

'What do they consist of?'

'Sixteen pioneers and four soldiers.'

'How far off are they?'

'Five hundred paces.'

'Good! we shall have time to finish our breakfast and to drink your health, d'Artagnan.'

'You are very kind,' answered d'Artagnan, 'but I am afraid your wishes won't profit me much.'

'Who knows,' said Athos lightly, and after draining his glass he rose carelessly, and picking up the gun that lay nearest him he sauntered to a loophole, followed by the rest, while Grimaud was ordered to stand behind them in order to load the spare muskets.

'Well,' said Athos contemptuously, as the little troop drew near the trenches, 'it hardly seems worth all the trouble we have taken to fight this handful of men armed with pikes and pickaxes. I'm sure that if Grimaud had only made a sign to them they would have gone away quite peaceably.'

'I doubt it,' answered d'Artagnan. 'They are coming on steadily on this side. And besides the pioneers, there are four soldiers and a brigadier armed with muskets.'

'I don't like firing on peaceable citizens of that sort,' said Aramis.

'It does seem rather a shame,' answered Athos.

'I don't believe they have seen us yet; I am going to speak to them.'

'You will get yourself shot,' cried d'Artagnan; but Athos paid no heed and advanced to the breach, his hat in one hand and his gun in the other.

'Gentlemen,' he shouted to the advancing party, who, astonished at the unexpected sight, halted suddenly fifty paces from the bastion. 'Some friends and I are breakfasting here. Now I need not tell you how unpleasant it is to be interrupted at one's breakfast, so I beg of you, if you have any business with us, to wait till we have finished, or else to return. Unless, of course, you will forsake the cause of the rebels, and join us in drinking the health of the king of France.'

'Take care, Athos,' exclaimed d'Artagnan, 'they are aiming at you.'

'Yes, I know, but these citizens are very bad shots. They won't touch me.'

As he spoke a shower of bullets fell about him, and left him unharmed. In an instant four guns replied from the bastion, and three of the Rochelais soldiers fell dead, while one of the pioneers was wounded.

'Another musket, Grimaud,' said Athos, who had not left the breach, and at the second volley the brigadier and two pioneers were killed, and the rest ran away.

'Now a sortie,' cried Athos, and all four clambered down to the field of battle, seized the muskets the soldiers had dropped, and returned to the bastion feeling quite sure that the fugitives would never stop till they had reached the town.

'Reload all the muskets, Grimaud,' said Athos; 'we are going to finish breakfast. But stay, tie a napkin to the brigadier's pike and plant it on top of the bastion, so that these rebels of Rochelle may understand that they are fighting loyal soldiers of the King.'

Grimaud obeyed in silence. An instant later the white flag of the Bourbons floated in the wind. A

thunder of applause followed. Half the camp was at the barrier, looking on.

'You are curious to know what I wanted with Milady,' continued Athos. 'Well, I had to get from her a blank sheet of paper signed by the Cardinal, which she could fill in as she chose. By this means she could get rid of any or all of us; beginning probably with d'Artagnan.'

'And is this blank order still in her hands?' asked d'Artagnan.

'No, it is in mine,' replied Athos.

'My dear Athos,' said d'Artagnan, 'I have lost count of the number of times you have saved my life? And you have the Cardinal's letter also?'

'Yes, here it is,' answered Athos, drawing it from his helmet and handing it to d'Artagnan.

'Read it,' said Porthos, and d'Artagnan read: 'It is by my order and for the good of the State that the bearer of this has done what he has done.'

December 5, 1627.

'RICHELIEU.'

The young men looked at each other.

'It sounds mysterious,' said Aramis at last, 'but in reality it is nothing but a pardon for any crime the bearer may choose to commit.'

'It must be torn up at once,' said d'Artagnan, who considered it as his own death-warrant.

'On the contrary, it must be kept carefully,' replied Athos. 'I would not part with that piece of paper for all the gold pieces that would cover it.'

'To arms!' cried Grimaud, and they all ran to their muskets.

This time the party consisted of more than twenty men, soldiers of the garrison of Rochelle.

'Hadn't we better go back to the camp?' asked Porthos. 'The sides are unequal.'

'Impossible for three reasons,' replied Athos.

‘First, we have not finished breakfast ; second, I have still some important things to tell you ; third, that the hour we undertook to remain here will not be up for ten minutes.’

‘Then we must make a plan of battle,’ said Aramis.

‘It will be very simple,’ answered Athos. ‘When the enemy is within reach, we fire ; if he continues to advance, we fire again ; and keep on firing as long as our muskets have charges in them. If the rest of them wish to try an assault we will allow them to get down into the trenches, and then push over that bit of the wall which is tottering already.’

‘Bravo,’ exclaimed Porthos. ‘Athos, you were born to be a general, and the Cardinal, who thinks himself a great commander, is nothing in comparison with you.’

‘Pick off your men,’ was all Athos said, and at his signal the four guns rang out like one, and four men fell. But the Rochelais still advanced in spite of the fire, and jumped into the trench.

‘The wall,’ said Athos, and with a mighty effort all four, aided by Grimaud, succeeded in moving the detached part, which after rocking backwards and forwards rolled over into the trench.

Only two or three wounded men were left to return to the town.

Then Athos took out his watch. ‘The hour is up,’ he said, ‘and we have won our wager. But we must not be in too great a hurry. Let us sit down and finish our conversation.’

So for ten minutes more they rested and talked, till a drum was heard in the direction of the town.

‘They will be sending a whole regiment,’ observed Athos.

‘But you don’t intend to fight a whole regiment ?’ cried Porthos.

‘Why not ? I am in the vein,’ replied Athos.

‘The drum is coming nearer,’ said d’Artagnan.



How the napkin
became a real flag

‘Let it come,’ remarked Athos. ‘It takes a quarter of an hour to get from here to the town, and that is more time than enough. We shall never find a better place to fight. But excuse me, I have some directions to give to Grimaud,’ and he signed to his valet.

‘Grimaud,’ he continued, pointing to the dead men lying inside the bastion. ‘You will take these gentlemen and set them up against the wall, with their hats on their heads and their guns in their hands.’

Grimaud nodded, and the four friends discussed their affairs, and who could be trusted to carry an important letter to London, in order to put a stop to the designs of Milady, when d’Artagnan exclaimed,

‘Look there! you said they would send a regiment, Athos, but it is a whole army!’

‘So it is,’ answered Athos turning round, ‘and they have stolen upon us without drums or trumpets. Well, Grimaud, have you finished?’

Grimaud nodded again, and pointed to a dozen dead men whom he had arranged along the walls in various attitudes, some taking aim, some bearing arms, and others with their hands on their swords.

‘Bravo,’ cried Athos, ‘it does credit to your imagination.’

‘That is all very well,’ said Porthos, ‘but I should like to understand what it all means.’

‘Let us be off first,’ answered d’Artagnan, ‘and you can understand afterwards.’

‘One moment,’ observed Athos, ‘give Grimaud time to clear away breakfast.’

‘I agree with d’Artagnan,’ said Aramis, ‘the sooner we get back to the camp the better.’

‘All right,’ remarked Athos, ‘just as you like. We have been here for an hour and a half.’

So they all followed Grimaud, who had hastily packed his basket.

‘But the flag,’ cried Athos, ‘we have forgotten that.’

It must not fall into the hands of the enemy, if it *is* only a table-napkin.' And he ran back into the bastion, and took down the flag amidst a shower of balls. Pausing a moment he waved it, and was answered by shouts of applause from the French camp.

Then a fresh volley from the rebels pierced the napkin, and it became transformed into a real flag.

'Come down, come down,' cried the French, and Athos joined his companions while the Rochelais directed a furious fire at the dead men on the walls.

And that was how Athos won his wager.

LITTLE GENERAL MONK

Little General Monk
Sat upon a trunk.

So sang your nurse to you when you were a baby. Now this story is to tell you how 'Little General Monk' got *inside* the trunk, and who put him there.

Monsieur d'Artagnan was thirty-five years older than when he had made friends with the three musketeers, and many battles had he fought since then. Instead of being eighteen, he was fifty-three, which makes a great deal of difference, but the Gascon was as ready as ever for a dangerous adventure and as skilful as before in carrying it out.

One day early in the year 1660, d'Artagnan entered a shop in the street of the Lombards, having for its sign a Golden Pestle, and was welcomed with a cry of joy by a middle-aged man in a white apron.

'Good morning, Planchet,' said d'Artagnan, greeting his old valet, who had turned into a confectioner, and grown fat in the process.

'Here, come quick, boys,' called Planchet in a bustle, 'let one hold Monsieur d'Artagnan's horse, and one prepare his room, and one serve up supper.'

'Thank you, Planchet!' answered d'Artagnan, as the apprentices ran hither and thither, proud of serving a soldier of whose greatness their master was never tired of talking.

‘I want to speak to you,’ said d’Artagnan, ‘so see that no one interrupts us.’

Planchet looked up uneasily.

‘Oh, it is all right,’ replied d’Artagnan, ‘nothing to take away my appetite,’ and he spoke truly as was seen when in a few minutes they sat down at the supper table.

‘I have got a piece of business on hand,’ he began, as soon as his hunger was satisfied. ‘It will be very profitable in the long run—of that I have no doubt—but meanwhile we must have plenty of money to spend.’

Planchet’s face fell.

‘How much, sir?’

‘Twenty thousand francs cash, for a month.’

‘And is it to be used in Paris?’

‘No; in England.’

‘And, if I may be allowed to ask, what sort of a business is it?’

‘A restoration.’

‘Of monuments?’

‘Yes, of monuments, Planchet. We are going to restore Whitehall.’

‘That sounds important. You think you can do that in a month?’

‘I do. But shut all the doors and open the windows, for the noise in the streets will prevent anyone who happens to be listening from overhearing us.’

‘You remember his Majesty Charles I. of England?’ asked d’Artagnan, pouring out a glass of wine.

‘It would not be easy to forget him, sir, seeing you left France to help him, and were very nearly pulled down in his fall. I remember also that he had two sons, and I saw the second one, the Duke of York, one day in the Palais-Royal, when he came over to see his mother, the Queen of England.’

‘ Well, what I have to say is about the elder brother, the Prince of Wales. I have watched him go through all sorts of miseries, and whatever happened he was always gay. I am sorry for him.’

At these words Planchet uttered a cry.

‘ What is the matter ? ’ said d’Artagnan.

‘ It is only—that I am afraid I understand——’

‘ What, Planchet ? That I hope to restore King Charles II. to his throne ? ’

‘ Ah ! ’ murmured Planchet, turning pale, ‘ so that is what you meant by a “ restoration.” ’

‘ To be sure. And I believe we shall succeed. But now I should like to consult you about some of the details.’

And for another hour they discussed their plans, or rather d’Artagnan explained his.

‘ You know that Cromwell is dead and that his son Richard has resigned ? ’ he said.

Planchet nodded.

‘ Well, the first man in England at the present moment is General Monk, who commands the army. He has never been defeated, and is besides very clever in politics, for he rarely opens his mouth. He will think for twelve hours before he bids you “ Good morning ! ” and then he says “ Good evening ! ” Now, listen ! I am going over to England with a few men, perhaps as many as forty, and I mean to kidnap him and bring him over to France, where I can dispose of him in one of two ways.’

‘ Ah ! Ah ! ’ cried Planchet, filled with enthusiasm. ‘ We will put him in a cage and show him for a penny a head.’

D’Artagnan laughed.

‘ I hadn’t thought of that ; it is a third way. Your plan is excellent, only mine are better. I should either ransom him for a hundred thousand crowns or else deliver him to King Charles, who will then be able to

restore himself and pay the hundred thousand crowns to me. What do you think of that, Planchet ?'

'It is magnificent ! Magnificent !' cried Planchet.

'I wish to start for England to-morrow,' continued d'Artagnan. 'Can you have the money ready ?'

'Yes, I will manage it.'

'Then I must draw up a contract, and we will both sign it,' and d'Artagnan wrote :

'Seeing that in the matter of the restoration of the King Charles II. to the throne of England, Monsieur d'Artagnan brings to his partnership with Monsieur Planchet his time, his labour, his mind, and his skin (all things very dear to him, especially the last) besides a capital of twenty thousand francs, it is agreed that Monsieur d'Artagnan shall keep two-thirds of the profits for himself. But in case Monsieur d'Artagnan should be killed before the work is accomplished, Monsieur Planchet gives hereby to his ghost a receipt for the twenty thousand francs he has lent him.'

On hearing this clause, Planchet frowned, but, on glancing at his partner, he looked so full of life and power that he took courage and signed his name without further protest.

After which d'Artagnan bade him good-night and went to bed.

D'Artagnan woke early and began to consider the number of men that would be most useful in his expedition to England. If Athos, Porthos and Aramis could have gone with him, he would have taken the forty of whom he had spoken to Planchet. But as they were all away from Paris—*where* he did not know—and there was no one else whom he could trust, he made up his mind at last to cut down the number to ten, whom he could always have under his own eye. So with six soldiers, and four sailors whom he found half drunk in a tavern in Calais, he started for Holland, where he

bought a fishing boat, for which he paid three thousand francs. In this they all set sail for the River Tyne, as d'Artagnan had learned that Monk and his army were encamped near the sea to the east of Newcastle, while his enemy, General Lambert, was drawn up on the opposite bank a little higher up.

Meat was scarce in both armies, and the English soldiers grumbled loudly. Monk, however, was more fortunate than his foe, as a large part of his force was composed of Scotchmen, who could live and fight on porridge, and looked with contempt on the hungry Englishmen. The general fared no better than his men, and he listened eagerly when late one evening a troop of soldiers entered his tent and informed him that they had just captured a fishing boat on its way to sell fish to the enemy.

'Where do these fishermen come from?' asked Monk.

'They are Frenchmen, who were fishing in Dutch seas and were blown across in the gale.'

'Do any of them speak English?'

'Their chief seems to know a little.'

'How many of them are there?'

'About ten or twelve, and the boat is of Dutch build.'

'And you say they were carrying the fish to General Lambert?'

'Yes, general. It seems they have made a good haul.'

'Well, send the head man to me,' said Monk, who thought the whole affair very suspicious.

The officer soon returned bringing with him a fisherman who looked past fifty, dressed in a woollen tunic, while a sailor's cap was pulled low over his eyes, and by his side hung a cutlass. He stood with the smile, half cunning, half stupid, peculiar to French peasants, while Monk examined him closely.

'You can speak English?' asked the general.

‘Very badly, my lord,’ answered the fisherman, with the accent of Southern France rather than the drawl of the North, as Monk was quick to notice.

‘You appear to me to have done more fishing off the shores of Gascony than in the Channel,’ said Monk smiling, and the man answered :

‘Yes, I was born in Gascony, my lord ; but I hope that doesn’t prevent my being a good fisherman. I have a fine cargo of mullets and whiting.’

‘And why do you wish to sell them to General Lambert and not to me ?’

‘Because, my lord, if you will excuse me, these town gentlemen pay well, while your Scotch eat little and pay nothing.’

Monk laughed. ‘But what made you come to this country ?’ he asked.

‘It was an accident, my lord. We were returning from Ostend to France with a cargo of mackerel when a strong south wind sprang up. It was impossible to sail in the teeth of it, so we made up our minds to sell our fish at the nearest port where we could land, and we cast anchor at the mouth of the Tyne, for, knowing that two armies were encamped there, we made sure we should have a good market.’

‘You came from Ostend, you say ? No doubt you heard plenty of gossip there about the man who calls himself King of England ?’

‘Ah, my lord, I did more than that, for I saw him walking on the sand hills waiting for horses to take him to the Hague. He is tall and pale, with black hair, and he looks as if the air of Holland did not agree with him.’

Monk, who understood French very well, listened attentively, watching the man’s face all the time. After a few more questions he added ‘When you return to your boat, you had better keep clear of the marshes, for they are the quarters of some of my Scottish troops, whom I have placed in ambush. Or, stay ! You shall

all sleep in a little group of tents near the refreshment booths. Digby, are you there ? ' he cried, and when the aide-de-camp appeared the general repeated his orders, but, before he had finished, a sergeant entered and saluted.

' What is it ? ' asked Monk.

' A French gentleman wishes to speak to your Excellency.'

' What is his name ? '

' That I cannot tell you, general ; it is no name for an English tongue.'

' Well, you can bring him in.'

' Am I to bandage his eyes ? '

' Why should you ? He will see nothing but eleven thousand men, all ready to fight for the Parliament. Now, my good man, you can go,' he continued, suddenly remembering the fisher. ' You shall have the money for your fish to-morrow,' and, followed by Digby, the man departed, passing on the way a tall figure wrapped in a long cloak, who was approaching the tent of the general.

The newcomer entered, and stood quietly waiting till Monk asked him his business. Then he answered in very good English that he wished to consult the general on a subject of great importance.

' You speak my language so well,' said Monk, himself speaking in French, ' that I cannot help inquiring where you learned it ? '

' In England, my lord. When I was young I passed some time in London. I have also travelled in Scotland, and have even spent a few weeks in the Abbey here, where part of your army is now encamped.'

' And your name ? ' asked Monk.

' The Comte de la Fère.'

' The Comte de la Fère,' repeated Monk, to whom it seemed in some way familiar ; ' have you any position in the French Court ? '

'None whatever, general. But King Charles I. made me a Knight of the Garter, and the Queen of France, Anne of Austria, gave me the Order of the Saint Esprit.'

'And what had you done to gain such brilliant distinctions?'

'Served their Majesties faithfully; that was all.'

Monk remained silent; he did not know what to think. The stranger appeared frank and straightforward, yet what could he want on the eve of a battle, except to act as a spy?

At length he said, 'Well, sir, let me hear your business.'

'When I was in Newcastle with the King before his late Majesty was delivered by the Scotch into the hands of Cromwell I buried a large sum of money in the vaults of the Abbey, under that tower on which the moon is shining at the present moment. As the Abbey itself is likely to be destroyed by cannon in the battle which will shortly take place, I have come to beg permission of your Excellency to take it away.'

'But are you sure it is there?' asked Monk. 'During all these years some one may have discovered it. And is the sum large enough to be worth all these risks?'

'It is a million of money, my lord; and it is contained in two barrels.'

'A million!' cried Monk, staring in surprise.

Then he added, 'I will help you to get it if it is still in its hiding place. And now, will you do me the honour to sup with me? As it happens, just before your arrival, one of your countrymen had brought me some fish.'

While they were eating, the talk of the two men wandered from one subject to another, but all concerning the French Court. When they had finished, Monk suddenly said, 'Can you recognise the place where your money is buried?'

'Yes, certainly I can,' answered Athos.

‘I will come with you to get it. Indeed, without me you would hardly be allowed to leave the camp.’

‘I know it, or else I should not permit you to give yourself the trouble.’

‘Shall we take anyone with us?’ asked Monk.

‘Two men and a horse to carry the barrels will be enough,’ replied Athos, and Monk, still puzzled and suspicious, buckled on a short sword and put a pistol in his belt, exposing as he did so the rings of a coat of mail. Then, taking a Scotch dirk in his left hand, he turned to Athos and inquired if he was ready.

‘Perfectly, if you are,’ was the reply, and, as he spoke, Athos laid his dagger on the table and his sword beside it, while he unbuttoned his tunic to take out his handkerchief, baring his chest as he did so, and showing carelessly that he had no arms concealed about him.

Quite alone the two men set out.

The way to the Abbey lay through the marshes on the outskirts of which Digby had lodged the French fishermen, and when they reached a place where three roads branched off, the general paused. ‘Which of these paths should we take?’ he asked, to see if Athos had really been there before, or if he was laying a trap for him.

‘The middle one, I think,’ answered Athos, and then a slight noise caused them both to look round.

‘Ah, Digby has followed us,’ observed Monk. ‘He may be useful, as we shall need a light. Digby, come here.’ But the supposed Digby suddenly stepped back into the shadow and made his way towards the fishers’ tents.

‘It isn’t Digby, after all,’ said Monk; but in a camp there is nothing uncommon in a man prowling about at eleven o’clock at night, and neither the general nor Athos thought anything of it.

‘One of your soldiers will bring us a torch,’ said

Athos ; but Monk, who was anxious to know if his guest was in league with the French fishermen, replied quickly :

‘No, I think we had better take one of those French sailors. They leave to-morrow, and therefore will not have so much chance of betraying our secret, whereas if once the story were to get about in the army that a treasure had been found in the Abbey of Newcastle, the men would imagine that a million was to be found under every stone.’

‘As you like, general,’ answered Athos.

As they drew near the fishermen’s quarters, Monk fancied he saw a shadow resembling that of the man who had followed them slip into the tent, but, on entering, leaving Athos outside, he felt sure he must be mistaken, for they were all asleep.

‘Wake up, somebody!’ called Monk, in French. Every one moved, some sitting up with sleepy eyes, some getting slowly on their legs. The man who had talked with Monk was the first to be on his feet.

‘What is it, your Honour?’ he asked in a voice which caused Athos’ heart to beat fast with astonishment.

‘Get a torch and one or other of you come with us,’ said Monk, and the man went to the back of the hut to fetch some tinder.

‘You go, Menneville,’ he whispered, in passing, ‘and be on the look out.’ Then he lit a lantern and gave it to his comrade, who took the path to the Abbey, with Monk and Athos behind him.

They had not gone twenty yards when the same man who had dogged their steps earlier left the tent, and crouching down by a stack of wood, watched them carefully. But very soon they were lost in the fog which hung about the river.

The door of the Abbey had been broken open, and the visitors passed in, the torchbearer going first. Monk,

his dirk in his hand, came last, for in spite of the fact that he was aware Athos was unarmed, he still continued to suspect him. But the Comte de la Fère walked on quite unmoved till they reached the vaults which lay under the great hall.

‘Here we are,’ he said.

‘Is this the stone?’ asked Monk, pointing to one bearing an inscription; ‘we shall need a lever.’

‘That young ash will do,’ answered Athos; ‘the fisherman can cut it down with his cutlass,’ and he called to the man in French, telling him what he wanted. When the branches were lopped off and nothing but the pole remained, Athos requested Monk in a low voice to bid the man leave them the torch and wait outside, as he did not wish him to guess at the secret of the treasure.

‘He wants to remain alone with me,’ thought the general suspiciously; ‘but after all I am as good as he,’ and he gave the order. Then Athos set to work and in a short time had broken through the plaster and come to the stones.

‘This is the masonry I spoke of,’ said Athos.

‘Yes, but I don’t see the barrels,’ replied Monk.

‘If I had only a poignard I would soon show them to you,’ answered Athos.

‘I would lend you mine but it is hardly strong enough,’ said Monk. ‘Why don’t you borrow the fisherman’s?’

‘Ah! I forgot his,’ replied Athos, and going to the foot of the stairs he cried out, ‘Here, my good fellow, throw me down your cutlass. I want it for a minute.’ The steel rattled on the floor of the vault, and Athos picked it up and returned to his place, pretending not to notice that Monk was standing in the shadow of a pillar with his dirk in his right hand and a pistol in his left.

‘There they are,’ exclaimed Athos, stooping and looking in.

‘Then you are satisfied?’ asked Monk. ‘And now will you explain this mystery?’

Athos looked at him steadily for a moment, as if trying to read the general’s thoughts. At length he answered :

‘This gold, my lord, does not belong to me, but to his Majesty Charles II., and the secret was confided to me by his father, who ordered me to hide it in this place before he was delivered to the Parliament at Newcastle. I am here, unarmed, and at your mercy, but I will not return to France without taking the money with me, as it is the last hope of the exiled prince.’

‘And when you deliver it to him what advice will give him?’

Athos drew himself up.

‘The advice I shall give him will be to raise with it two regiments to land in Scotland and to grant the demands made by the people. I shall also advise him to command the army in person, and to die, if need be, with the banner of England in his hand.’

‘Unhappily,’ answered Monk, ‘kings never follow good advice.’

‘But Charles II. is not a king,’ replied Athos, smiling.

‘Where are you lodging?’ inquired Monk abruptly.

‘In a little village at the mouth of the river. In the first house.’

‘Oh! I know it. Well, I will have the two barrels sent there. But where is your boat?’

‘At anchor about a quarter of a mile from the shore.’

‘You cannot sail yet,’ said Monk, ‘or my men would instantly suspect a plot between us. Wait for eight days, and by then I shall either have fought Lambert or we shall have made peace. In the meantime, keep quiet in the house; for I do not wish to have to send the money to your prince myself.’

Athos smiled.

‘In eight days, then,’ he answered.

By order of the general, the fisherman bade a sergeant who was stationed near by fetch a horse with panniers, and two men to lift two barrels of gunpowder that were lying in the vault, and carry them to the first house in the village at the mouth of the river. As he was anxious to see the barrels safely on their way, Monk remained where he was, talking to Athos about the difference of arms and discipline in the English and French armies, loud enough for his men to hear. As soon as the horse’s steps were approaching, he said quickly to Athos, ‘You are safe now. I am going back to the camp.’

‘I shall see you again, my lord?’ asked Athos.

‘Yes, as we have arranged, and with great pleasure,’ answered Monk, and went up the staircase which led into the air.

He had not walked twenty paces when the sound of a distant whistle struck upon his ears. He stopped and looked about him, but seeing nothing continued on his way. Then he remembered the French fisherman, but he seemed to have disappeared, although if the general had possessed better eyes he might have detected him crawling like a snake along the ground, till he was lost in the fog. And if there had been no fog, Monk might have noticed that the fisherman’s barque had changed its place and was now lying alongside the bank of the river.

Monk saw neither of these things, but he felt uneasy, and when he recollected that he had a mile to walk before he reached his camp, he quickened his pace. Once he fancied he heard the sound of an oar not far distant, but the fog was so thick that he could see nothing.

‘Who is there?’ he cried. But there was no answer.

It was seven o'clock next morning and the sun was shining over the marshes, when Athos looked out of his window and was amazed to find the same sergeant and his men drawn up before the house.

'Is anything the matter?' he asked.

'Nothing, sir. What should be the matter?' replied the sergeant. 'Yesterday the general ordered me to watch over your safety, and I am obeying him.'

'Is the general in camp?' said Athos.

'No doubt, sir. He was on his way there yesterday when you left him.'

'Well, wait for me. I must go to the camp myself and report that you have executed your orders, and also fetch back my sword which I have left there.'

'That will suit me exactly,' answered the sergeant, 'as I was just about to ask you to accompany us to the general's quarters.'

On their arrival at the camp, Athos remarked that the soldiers glanced at him strangely and suspiciously, but he passed on into the tent of General Monk, where he found his sword where he had left it on the table, around which were seated two colonels and a lieutenant—all unknown to him.

'Is this the gentleman who went out with the general?' asked one of the officers.

'Yes, sir,' answered the sergeant.

'Have I denied it?' broke in Athos angrily at the tone in which the officer spoke. 'If General Monk has any questions to put to me, I will answer them. Where is he? I demand to be taken to him at once.'

'As to where he is, you know that better than we do.'

'I?' exclaimed Athos in surprise.

'Yes, you.'

'I do not understand what you mean.'

'What did the general say to you yesterday?' asked the colonel.

‘I will tell you that when I am in the presence of the general himself.’

‘But,’ answered the colonel, ‘you know perfectly well that we cannot take you before the general.’

‘This is the second time you have said that. Is he absent?’

The English officers looked at each other. Athos was plainly speaking the truth, and they began to think that he really knew nothing about the matter. After a pause, the lieutenant said :

‘The general left you yesterday outside the Abbey?’

‘Yes, he did.’

‘And where did you go?’

‘That you had better ask of the soldiers who accompanied me.’

‘And you do not know what has become of the general?’

‘I have already answered that question.’

‘Yes, but it is hardly possible to believe your answer.’

‘It is true, all the same. I am a gentleman, and it is not my custom to lie; and when I am wearing the sword which from a sense of honour I laid on that table last night no one dares doubt my word. To-day I am unarmed. If you make yourselves my judges, judge me. If you are only my executioners, kill me.’

‘But, sir——’ began the lieutenant more politely than he had yet spoken; but Athos interrupted him.

‘I came to confide to your general secrets of importance, and he did not receive me as he would have received an ordinary man—so your soldiers will tell you. You do not expect me, I suppose, to reveal either my secrets or his?’

‘But those barrels—what was in them?’

‘Haven’t you asked the soldiers? What did they answer?’

‘That they contained powder and shot.’

‘And how did they know that?’

‘The general told them so; but, of course, we do not believe it.’

‘Then it is not I whom you accuse of lying, but your commander.’ The officers again exchanged glances, and Athos continued: ‘In the presence of the men, the general bade me wait eight days, and he would give me my answer. Well, I am waiting.’

‘To wait eight days?’ cried the lieutenant.

Athos bowed. ‘I have a sloop at the mouth of the river, and if I had wished to escape I had nothing to do but to go on board her last night. But, as I said, I am waiting.’

At these words the lieutenant leaned across the table and said to his companions, ‘If this is true, there is still some hope. The general must have wished to carry through some negotiations. We can do nothing till the eight days are passed.’

‘It is very strange, all the same,’ remarked the colonel, ‘and I cannot help thinking that those French fishermen have something to do in the matter. It was one of them who accompanied the general to the Abbey with a torch. And this morning both the barque and the fishers have vanished.’

‘I agree with you,’ said Athos, ‘that the general is the victim of a plot; for if he had been going to leave the camp of his own free will he would have told me.’

But here the lieutenant gave a warning glance at his superior officers, and answered quickly:

‘You are rather hasty in your conclusions, sir. Monk is in the habit of disappearing for a short time, and there is really no reason for alarm. Still, he would be very angry if he thought we had betrayed the fact of his absence, and we must keep strict silence on the subject.’

‘You are right,’ replied Athos; ‘and, for my part, I will beg you to set a watch round my house, which,

till the return of the general I shall consider my prison.'

Two days had gone by, and the camp at Newcastle was still without its general, when on the other side of the North Sea a small barque cast its anchor near Scheveningen in Holland. The night was dark and the sand hills were deserted, and there was no one to notice a little boat which put out from the ship, or a man who jumped on shore, after giving a sharp word of command to the rowers. Cautiously he made his way to the end of the village, where stood a little house hidden among trees, and guarded by a huge dog, which bayed loudly.

'You are better than any bell,' said the stranger to himself; and he waited patiently till a voice inquired through a grating in the door what he wanted.

'His Majesty King Charles the Second,' was the answer.

'Who are you?' asked the voice.

'Oh, I never shout my name in the open air. Don't be afraid. I shall not eat your dog, and hope he may not eat me.'

'You have brought some news?'

'Yes, and some news you never expected to hear. But don't keep me waiting any longer. I am worth my weight in gold, I assure you.'

'The King's orders are that no one shall be admitted without first telling his name.'

'Well, then — if I must — I am the Chevalier d'Artagnan.'

'Monsieur d'Artagnan! I thought I knew your voice. Come in—come in!'

'Why, it is Parry!' exclaimed d'Artagnan. 'But there is no time to lose. Go and tell the King.'

Parry soon returned, and bade d'Artagnan follow him into a room where the King was working by the light of a lamp.

‘Where is Monsieur d’Artagnan?’ asked he, as the fisherman entered.

‘Before you, sire. You may remember having seen me at Blois in the ante-chamber of King Louis the Fourteenth.’

‘I recollect. Have you brought me news?’

‘Yes, sire, and I hope your Majesty will deign to look on it favourably.’

‘Speak,’ said Charles.

‘If I am not mistaken, sire, your Majesty when you were at Blois was much troubled about the affairs of England.’

Charles grew red.

‘It was to the King of France alone that——’

‘Excuse me, sire, I am not wanting in respect to your Majesty; but hear me out, I pray you. Your Majesty was complaining of the difficulty of entering England and seizing the throne, without either men or money.’

‘Indeed——’ cried Charles impatiently, but again d’Artagnan stopped him.

‘And the chief obstacle was the Parliamentary general.’

‘Let me repeat,’ answered Charles, ‘that my words were for the ears of the King alone.’

‘Well, I am going to show you, sire, that it was lucky for you that they fell on mine. This man who stood in your Majesty’s way was Monk, I think you said. Did I catch his name rightly?’

‘You did. But what is the meaning of all these questions?’

‘That if General Monk is so great an obstacle to your success, it would be well either to get rid of him or to turn him into an ally.’

‘A king who has neither men nor money can do nothing against Monk.’

‘Ah! sire, happily for you, I had a different opinion.’

‘What do you mean?’

‘That with neither men nor money, I have done what neither men nor money could do.’

‘But what? *What* have you done?’

‘I have captured the man who stood in your Majesty’s way.’

‘Captured him? Captured Monk? Where? In England?’

‘Exactly, sire. Did I do wrong?’

‘You are mad!’

‘Not the least in the world, sire.’

‘But where did you take him?’

‘In the middle of his camp; and I have brought him to your Majesty.’

‘You have brought him here?’

‘Yes, sire, he is downstairs in a great case pierced with holes, so that he should not die of suffocation. Would your Majesty like to see him and speak to him, or shall I throw him into the sea?’

‘Is it a bad joke?’ exclaimed Charles, who was quite bewildered. ‘I don’t understand.’

‘You will in a moment, sire,’ and going to the window d’Artagnan gave three sharp whistles.

The King sat staring at d’Artagnan, who remained smiling at the window. But before he could recover from his surprise sufficiently to speak, eight of the men from the barque entered the ante-room, staggering under the weight of the huge case to which d’Artagnan had alluded. It had been made by his orders at Calais, before his ship had set sail for the English camp, and when he had taken advantage of the fog to seize Monk, the general had a gag thrust into his mouth, and was carried at once into the boat which was waiting in the river close by. Once on board, he was instantly thrust into the case, which was large enough for him to stretch himself out and to turn. During the voyage, d’Artagnan,

who always sat beside it, made various attempts to get him to eat and to speak, but the prisoner would do neither.

After dismissing the men who had brought the case from the shore, d'Artagnan opened its door, and addressed Monk :

'General, I ask your forgiveness a thousand times. I know that I have treated you in a manner quite unsuitable to a man of your rank ; but what could I do ? Here, however, you are free to speak and to walk,' and, cutting the cords which bound Monk's arms, he ushered him into the presence of Charles.

'Sire,' he said, 'your enemy, General Monk. General Monk, this is his Majesty Charles the Second, King of Great Britain.'

'I know no king of Great Britain,' answered Monk coldly ; 'and I see no one here present whom I should even call a gentleman ; for it was in the name of the King Charles the Second that a person who seemed to me to be an honest man laid this trap for me. Now listen, both of you, to what I am going to say. My body is in your power ; you can kill it, and you had better do it, for you will never possess either my soul or my will. And further, it is useless putting to me any questions. I shall not open my mouth again, even if you torture me.'

'The general is a very determined man,' whispered d'Artagnan to the King. 'I was afraid he would starve himself to death during the voyage. But as I have delivered him up to you, my duty is done, and your Majesty will deal with him as you please.'

Charles remained silent and sat thinking deeply for some minutes. Before him was the man he had so much desired to see—the man who stood between him and his kingdom. He guessed the humiliation Monk must be feeling at having been trapped in such a way, and suddenly he made up his mind what to do.

‘Will you listen to me for an instant?’ he said quietly. ‘You tell me that I sent a man to Newcastle to lay an ambush for you—a statement which must have puzzled Monsieur d’Artagnan, to whom I must express my gratitude for all he has risked for me. But mark—and I am not saying so to shield myself—Monsieur d’Artagnan went to England entirely of himself, without orders, and without hope of reward, to render service to an unfortunate king, and to add another to the many great deeds which shed glory on his name.’ He paused, but Monk gave no sign of having heard his words.

‘But Monsieur d’Artagnan,’ continued Charles, ‘was quite unaware that the Comte de la Fère had already started for Newcastle.’

‘Athos!’ exclaimed d’Artagnan.

‘To try and persuade the general to consent to meet either myself or some one whom I should appoint, in order to discuss matters, when you, Monsieur d’Artagnan, violently thrust yourself into the affair.’

‘So it was he whom I saw entering the general’s tent that night!’ cried d’Artagnan again; and a slight movement of Monk’s face told him he had guessed right.

‘You have accused me, general, of laying a trap for you,’ said the King; ‘but I do not fight you with such weapons, and I will show that you are wrong. Be kind enough to follow me; you also, Monsieur d’Artagnan,’ and Charles left the house, followed by d’Artagnan, who in his turn was followed by Monk. The King unlocked a small gate, and they passed out on to the sand hills, when he stopped and looked about him in the darkness.

‘Where is your boat?’ he asked d’Artagnan.

‘There, sire.’

‘Ah! I see it now. But you did not cross the North Sea in that?’

‘No, sire; I hired a small ship, which I sent back to its port.’

‘General,’ said the King, turning to Monk, ‘you are free. There is a fisherman living close by who has a boat ready to put to sea, large enough to take you wherever you wish to go. Monsieur d’Artagnan will be your escort.’

‘I wish to go to England,’ answered Monk, speaking for the second time since he left Newcastle ; and Charles bowed a farewell, adding :

‘You will forgive me all the violence you have suffered, when you are convinced that it was not by my orders.’

And that was how Little General Monk got *out* of his trunk, and proved a little later how entirely he forgave Charles by making him King of England.

Adapted and shortened from the ‘Vicomte de Bragelonne.’

THE HORSE WITH WINGS

Now Anteia, Queen of Corinth, fairest of all the cities of the Greeks, hated Bellerophon, son of Glaucos, because he would not do her bidding, and she besought Proitos, her husband, to put him to death. But Proitos, the king, would not, for he loved the youth, who was brave and truthful and wronged neither man nor woman. Then Anteia, filled with anger that Proitos refused to listen to her, made up a cunning tale, and in the end prevailed with him to send Bellerophon across the seas to her father, the King of Lycia, bearing a letter saying that the young man had done insult to the gods and must be slain in any way that seemed to him best.

So Bellerophon, son of Glaucos, crossed the sea, and arrived in the country of Lycia. And the King, hearing that he had come from Corinth, and wondering greatly at his beauty and noble manners, made great feasts for nine days in his honour, and summoned the chief men to be present. Much did Bellerophon prize the good will of the King of Lycia, but more still the favour of the Princess his daughter, sister of Anteia, but fairer than she, and pure of heart instead of evil.

But on the tenth day the King of Lycia bethought him of the letter, and he cut the strings that bound it with his dagger and read the words of Proitos.

‘Never will I believe that Bellerophon has spoken ill of the gods,’ he said to himself ; ‘yet if I fail to grant

his prayer, Anteia will stir up war between us. Still, slay him in cold blood I never will. He shall go forth and fight the terrible Chimæra, whose fiery breath lays waste the land, and whom no man hitherto has conquered.'

Thus he thought, but his face was sad, for well he knew the strength of that three-headed monster, and so gloomy was he that his daughter saw it, and he told her the whole matter.

That night as Bellerophon slept a maiden stood beside him, holding in her hand a horse's bit, with a head-band of gold.

'Take this bit in thy hand, and seek out Pegasus the winged horse,' said she, 'and when you have found him, slip this bit over his head, and jump on his back, and in this wise you shall slay the Chimæra.'

And Bellerophon smiled in his sleep, thinking it was a dream, but when he woke, his eyes fell straightway on the bit, and the golden head-band.

Up and down the country he went, over mountains, across rivers, and sometimes he fancied he heard the rush of wings above him, or thought he beheld afar a shape of glistening white feeding in a meadow. But days went by and the bit remained idle in his hands, till one morning when he was lying on a mossy bed at the foot of a great tree, the branches of the wood behind him cracked and broke, as if some one—or something—was pushing through.

'A wood-cutter, doubtless,' he spake to himself, yet even as he said so, he knew it was no wood-cutter.

Out of the trees stepped the horse he had so long sought, his white wings folded close, and turned to drink from a spring which was pouring down the hill-side. Very thirsty he was, for he had flown across the ocean that night and was weary. So he thrust his nose deep into the water and heard no sound of Bellerophon's



TAKE THIS BIT AND SEEK OUT PEGASUS THE WINGED HORSE

footsteps, and knew nothing till the golden band was over his head. Then with a start he bounded upwards ; but he was too late. Bellerophon was seated on his back.

‘ Softly ! Softly ! ’ said the young man at last. ‘ Let us be friends ! We have great deeds to do together, you and I.’

‘ What are they ? my master,’ asked Pegasus, ‘ for in truth you are my master, though never did I dream that thus I should call any man.’

‘ We have to slay the Chimæra,’ Bellerophon made answer, ‘ and I know not where to find her.’

‘ But *I* know,’ said the horse ; ‘ but three days ago she was on the plains of the east, laying waste the fields of ripe corn with the breath of her nostrils. It may be she is there still.’

‘ I have heard much talk of that Chimæra,’ answered Bellerophon, ‘ and how she is made up of three beasts which have no fellowship one with the other,—a lion, a goat and a serpent. The serpent will seek to sting you, the goat to overthrow you with its horns, but the lion shrivels you to ashes with its tongue of flame. Therefore, before the fight begins, let us go down to earth, and I will cut myself a sod of grass, and thrust it in the throat of the lion with the point of my sword ! Of the serpent and the goat I have no fear.’

Slowly Pegasus folded his wings, and slowly, slowly, they sank, till they found themselves alone in a flowery meadow. Here Pegasus knelt, while from his back leaned Bellerophon, and cut a thick and deep wedge of sod, which he hid in his wallet. Then they soared up again among the white clouds, till towards evening they saw before them a land grey and desolate, with heaps of burnt-up stalks lying around, telling where golden corn ears had lifted their heads. Bellerophon looked, and his soul grew hot within him.

‘Where is the monster?’ he said; ‘I will not leave her another hour to work destruction.’

‘Behold her sleeping,’ replied Pegasus, ‘but think not to kill her so; her serpent’s ears will hear us,’ and as he guided his course towards the beast, she sprang upwards with a snarl more horrible than any thunder.

Lifting her lion’s head she tried to scorch the feathers of his wings, and had she done so, swift would have been the doom of both horse and rider. But Pegasus, to whom the gods had given much wisdom, knew this and, as she reared upwards, wheeled quickly to the side where the long serpent’s neck was ready for a spring. It darted forward, its forky tongue quivering to bury itself in the leg of the man who had dared to measure himself against the mighty Chimæra, but once more Pegasus turned, and the snake’s head met the shining sword of Bellerophon. The first enemy was beaten, yet the victory was not quite complete, for the keen point of the goat’s horn had entered into the flank of the horse, and blood flowed from it. Suddenly a sharp pain ran through him, and he soared upwards, for not yet did he have strength to finish the fight.

‘If we could only have ended it then,’ he said, when the blood ceased flowing, and the pain had gone. ‘Now, I fear me, that the power of the serpent will have passed into the other two. Yet to have continued would have meant death to both of us.’

‘I know; but the goat was the one I dreaded least,’ answered Bellerophon. ‘Still it was foolish to think we should slay what no man has conquered without a scratch.’

‘Sit firm, and make ready your sword, I am starting,’ cried the horse, and with a rush like that of the lightning he sped through the air. Even the Chimæra had hardly time to prepare herself, but what the goat’s head had once done, it hoped to do again, and the long horn was pointed to the spot whence the attack must come. But the attack did not come from that side; as before, the



BELLEROPHON-FIGHTS-THE-CHIMAERA

horse made a sudden spring outwards; Bellerophon drew out the sod and fixed it to the end of his sword, and when the lion opened its mouth to scorch them, he thrust the sword far down its throat, and forced the flames downwards, till its body was burned as black as the ears of corn.

At the sight of the dead lion the goat was filled with fury, but the body beside it dragged heavily, and it was no longer free to move its horn as swiftly as in the first fight. Soon it gave signs of weariness, and the horse seeing this approached warily till his rider, stooping from his saddle, gave a clean cut with his sword. The goat's head rolled down, and Bellerophon picked it up, and bore it back to the court of the King of Lycia, who fell on his neck and embraced him like a son.

But not yet was he satisfied, for he feared the wrath of Proitos, King of Corinth.

'Go now and slay the mighty men of the Solymi who dwell near the river Meander, and have wrought much evil to my lands and people,' said Iobates, King of Lycia, and Bellerophon bowed his head, and went out to tell Pegasus who was awaiting him.

After that he returned to sharpen his sword, and to look to his dagger, for he knew not what manner of people these Solymi might be, having heard that they were strangers, come from out the island of Crete.

At dawn, next morning, the soldiers chosen by Iobates, King of Lycia, to march against the Solymi set forth, and Bellerophon, mounted on Pegasus, soared into the air above them, and gave them courage, for stories were often told of the great deeds of the Solymi, who had taken many captives among the Lycians, and eaten up the fruits of many harvests. At last they beheld the mountain which bore their name, and at the foot of it the Solymi were drawn up, their shields and spears glittering on each side of the long square, which as

the Lycians well knew, it was not easy to break. Even with the aid of Bellerophon, and the swift wings of



Pegasus, the fight was hard, but at length the Lycians overcame, though no such mighty warriors had Bellerophon ever fought with. Then they swore to trouble the

land no more, and to pay tribute, and Bellerophon returned with his tale to the King of Lycia.

‘I have other work for thee,’ said the King, when he had listened well-pleased to the adventure; ‘the Amazons who, women though they be, are as strong in the arm and as skilful with the bow as any marksman in Lycia, these women I say have crossed the borders of my kingdom and the people are fleeing before them. They are led by their Queen Myrina on a horse black as night, known as the Flyer, for in truth his feet seem hardly to touch the ground. Behind her, also mounted, are the rest of her tribe, and a fair sight it is to see.’

Then Bellerophon bowed his head, and went forth to fight them, though indeed he was loth to wound women, least of all women so goodly and brave as they. But they pressed him and his men hard, and he was forced to strike, till some fled and the rest lay dead before him. And this time likewise he turned back to the Court, not knowing that Anteia, Queen of Corinth, hearing that Bellerophon still lived, had written to her father desiring him to make an end of the business, or else ships of war would sail against Lycia. With shame of heart, that he should do so base a thing, Iobates set an ambush down a rocky path along which Bellerophon (who this time had not got Pegasus to aid him, he having other work to do) was forced to pass. But as he drew near, the rays of the sun caught one of their helmets, and Bellerophon marked it, and fell on them in a manner they nowise expected, and he slew them all, so that none returned to their homes.

And by these great deeds, the King of Lycia at last knew that Bellerophon was not a man like another, but that he was sprung from an Immortal, and was beloved of the gods, who were stronger than Anteia, Queen of Corinth. So he put the fear of her away from him, and gave Bellerophon his younger daughter for a wife, and the half of his kingdom, and the Lycians honoured him above all men.

THE PRIZE OF JEANNE JUGAN

WE hear a great deal nowadays of orders instituted and rewards given to those who have risked their lives to save others, and we all feel glad and proud to know of such deeds. But in England we have no prize to offer to people who bestow themselves—that is, their strength and time and thought, as well as their earnings, in daily care for helpless, friendless creatures who would otherwise die alone. In France, however, there lived, a hundred years ago, a man called Monthyon, who, during years of work as a magistrate in all parts of the country, had noted the goodness of the poor to each other, and left a sum of 800*l.* a year to be given to anyone whom the forty French Academicians considered most deserving of it.

Now Monthyon was a very sensible man, and knew well that all sorts of people would come forward to claim this money who had no kind of right to it, and he took great pains to make rules which would ensure the reward going to the proper person ; the more so, as he was aware that those who are loudest in praising themselves have generally little to be praised for. So he decreed that to obtain the money, or any part of it, a number of people should bear witness that the candidate for the prize had really done something to deserve it. The paper was to be signed by the neighbours, the priest, the mayor, and some gentleman of the town, and then at last it was to be laid before the prefect, or head of the

department, and he in his turn was to send it up to the body of learned men in Paris, known as the Academy.

Monthyon had been dead several years when a young Normandy peasant woman named Jeanne Jugan entered the service of a lady in the little town of St. Servan, in Brittany. Jeanne's new mistress lived quite alone, and part of her maid's duty was to go with her every day to the poor people of the village—many of them fishers—and carry food and firing to the old and sick, while they spent their evenings at home making clothes for the children. Many a night did Jeanne and her mistress pass, trying to bring back to life some wrecked sailor who had been washed on shore, or feeding a baby with spoonsful of warm milk which otherwise might have died for lack of proper care. In these years Jeanne learned a great deal about various important things, and when her mistress died in 1839, she had quite made up her mind to follow in her footsteps.

At first sight, this did not seem easy, as Jeanne had saved very little money. But she was well known to everybody for many miles round St. Servan, and when she told her friends that she was not going to service any more but meant to take in needlework, she soon had as much as she could do. To be sure, it was a trade that was very badly paid, but her house was her own, left her by her mistress, and she was a wonderful manager. Long ago she had formed a plan of helping those who needed it, and now at last it was possible for her to carry it out.

'The sister of old Cécile down by the sea has dropped down dead,' said an old man to Jeanne one day, when he met her bringing home some work from a farm across the heath.

'Poor thing! Poor thing!' cried Jeanne, 'I must go to her at once,' and off she went, to find the tiny room full of neighbours all gathered round the old blind

woman. They meant to be kind, but their words only made her feel more unhappy. 'Ah, what a loss to you, Cécile!' murmured they. 'How will you live without her earnings? We will do all we can, and bring you some food, but the fishing has been bad of late—and there are the children.' And Cécile knew it was true, and wept afresh as she felt her desolation.

Into the midst of them came Jeanne. She had overheard some of their speeches, and understood at once what Cécile would be feeling.

'She is coming home with *me*,' said Jeanne, 'and I will take care of her, and she will be fine company for me in the long dark evenings, while I am knitting by the fire,' for Jeanne always made it appear as if you were doing her a favour by accepting kindness.

'Oh, Jeanne, do you really mean it?' sobbed Cécile.

'Of course I do, and as I am tired and want my supper, we had better start at once,' and wrapping a shawl round her, Jeanne helped her up, and led her through the wondering women down the street.

For a few days old Cécile sat thankfully by the fire and gave no trouble, but by and by she became used to being there and kept Jeanne running about to get her this and that, hindering her greatly in her work. Jeanne, however, was accustomed to old people and knew that often they were not very considerate, and that, being blind, Cécile did not see the harm she was doing, so the good soul just got up a little earlier or sat up a little later, in order that the work should be done by the appointed day.

Two or three months after Cécile had come to live with her, Jeanne heard of an old servant, whose mistress had died, leaving her penniless. It was not the lady's fault, for she herself had lost all her money some time before, and had begged Marie to find another place where she would receive good wages. But Marie would listen to nothing.

‘I will stay with you,’ she said, ‘and as for wages, what do they matter? I have my savings, and they will do for us both till better times come;’ but better times did *not* come, and the savings melted away, and though Marie tried to obtain a day’s work now and then, they could hardly keep themselves alive, till she was almost glad when her mistress died peacefully in her sleep, and was out of it all.

This was the story that Jeanne heard, and off she started for the village where Marie lived. She found her in a kitchen without a fire, and only a slice of rye-bread in the cupboard.

‘Will you come and live with me?’ she said gently. ‘I have not much, but what is enough for two is enough for three, and I shall be glad to have you.’

With heartfelt gratitude Marie accepted the offer, and as she was a very different person from Cécile, Jeanne was far happier for her presence. But her charity did not stop there; another and another tale of distress was poured into her ears, and somehow her house was always large enough to take in anyone who needed a home. No one knew how she did it, but after a while the people round about grew ashamed of letting everything rest on her shoulders, and gave her help of various kinds—one sent warm clothes for her old women, another logs chopped up for firing, a third a bag of meal for bread, so that the household never really suffered starvation though it was often very near it.

But Jeanne at last was obliged to own that there was not room even for as much as a baby. She contrived to let the house, to her great joy, and moved into a bigger one which had been standing empty for some time, so that she got it for a low rent. Unfortunately that autumn was long remembered for its heavy gales, and many fishing boats went down off the shore, and many old, infirm mothers were left destitute. Jeanne

took them all in; the neighbours now thought it was quite natural that she should, and in a month's time twelve people were living in the new house, which was as full as the old one had been. What was she to do? Allow the friendless creatures to die of neglect? Quite clearly that was impossible. Then the richer townsmen of St. Servan subscribed and bought her a still larger house, but at the same time they told her that they did not mean to do any more for her, and that she must feed and clothe all her guests herself.

This prospect might have frightened many women, but not Jeanne. Shortly after they were all settled in the new dwelling she heard that an old sailor of seventy-two was lying uncared for in a damp cellar, without a relation in the world. Without a moment's delay she hastened to the place, and found the old man almost naked, stretched out on some straw, with nothing but a piece of coarse bread beside him. Before attempting even to explain what she had come for, she made him drink a little milk and eat an egg which she had brought with her, and then she told him that in half an hour four fisher friends of hers would bring a sort of rough litter and carry him off to her house.

Oh, how grateful the poor man was! And after a few weeks of nursing he grew quite well, and able to earn his own living.

It was not only old people that Jeanne rescued and supported; several children were to be found in the home. There was a lame little girl who had been adopted when she was only five, after the death of both her parents from fever; and a big girl of fourteen, whose father and mother ran away one day, fearing lest they should be thrown into prison for stealing; and two small boys of nine and ten who had walked miles from Lower Brittany and reached St. Servan one winter's night, nearly dead with cold and hunger. They knocked at

the first house they came to, but the door was shut in their faces, and, try as they might, no one would give them shelter or even food. The younger boy at length sank down on the pavement, unable to walk another step, while his brother stood over him. Very soon a crowd gathered round them, and some one, on hearing their story, exclaimed, 'Let us take them to Jeanne.' So to Jeanne they went, and there they stayed till their father, who had been very ill, could get work again, and was able to support them and their mother.

Six years had passed and the number of Jeanne's guests now amounted to sixty-five. By this time a doctor living in St. Servan had offered to visit the home daily, as many of the inmates suffered from bad illnesses. Then three ladies in the town proposed to Jeanne to allow them to help her as nurses and housekeepers, which she thankfully did. The story became known to the world, and on December 11, 1845, Jeanne received from the French Academy 120*l.* as the *Prix Monthyon*.

UNLUCKY JOHN

A FAIRY LEGEND

IN an unknown country there lived a poor man, John by name, nicknamed the 'Unlucky.' He lived in a forest, and his work consisted in making wooden spoons, salt boxes, mugs, and various other things needed in every house. The work brought him in very little and John could hardly make both ends meet. Notwithstanding all this, however, it yet came into his head to marry the daughter of his neighbour, the wood-cutter. His wife's dowry only consisted of two strong arms and a pair of beautiful eyes which shone out like two stars from her pretty face. A year had not quite passed when a son was born unto John, a boy healthy and quick as a squirrel.

And now Unlucky John became thoughtful. 'I can give nothing to my boy,' he said to himself; 'well, then, at least I will look out for a godmother for him, and such a godmother as will care for him as if he were her own son, in case it happened that suddenly I were to die.'

Having made up his mind, John set out in search of a godmother. He walked and walked—he could not tell for how long—till at last he perceived a woman coming towards him in a red dress and blue mantle; on her head she wore a wreath of roses and in her hand glittered a golden rod.



How
John

The Queen
VENUS

refused to trust his son to

'Good morning, my good man,' she said. 'Where are you off to so early?'

'I'm looking for a godmother for my son.'

'Take me, then. I shall only be too pleased.'

'Thank you,' answered John; 'but you see I want one who would be just.'

'Well, then, take me; you will not regret it. I am the Capricious Fairy and reign over this forest.'

John was struck.

'So it is you who are the Fairy! I am sorry; but I fear it is no use.'

'And why is that?' asked the Fairy in an offended tone.

'For this reason. I don't know whether it is because we failed in our respects to you, or whether we did not honour you sufficiently. Indeed all of us, from the smallest to the biggest, come every spring to decorate your grotto with many coloured flowers; it is to you we bring the largest sheaf; in your honour is drunk the first glass of wine. We always hope that your heart may be touched by us and that you may take pity on us. But instead of this, what do we see? You awake in a bad humour and everything goes wrong. Whoever may want fine weather, you send storms; where rain is greatly needed, you burn everything by drought. The poor man struggles, does his utmost, and you care not a straw, you scarcely move a finger to help him; to the idler, however, you show yourself gracious. No, madam, you are not to be the godmother of my boy and, therefore, good-bye!'

And off went Unlucky John. He walked and walked until he came to a meadow all covered with lilies of the valley. There stood a woman, dressed in white and green; in her apron she held some flowers, and she was as beautiful as a morning in May.

'Where are you hurrying to?' said she.

'I'm looking for a godmother for my son.'

‘Would you like to have me?’ she asked, in a kind voice. ‘I should only be too pleased.’

‘Thanks. But, you see, I want a just one. And you, fair lady, who are you?’

‘I am the Queen Venus. It is I who give beauty to the people; it is I, also, who give them love—love, the very best thing on earth.’

‘No, dear lady, you will not do for us,’ said Unlucky John, shaking his head.

‘How rude you are!’ exclaimed Venus. ‘And why not?’

‘Why? Because you are not just; that’s why. You give a beautiful face to persons whose soul is darker than night, and a good man you send into the world as ugly as a brute. And as regards love, it is even worse; you sow it around in a most thoughtless manner, right and left. All this you do without the least thought whatever. It is your fault that we do not see anywhere a truly happy family; the husband wants one thing, the wife the other. Go your way, fair lady.’

‘How silly you are!’ said Venus, shrugging her shoulders.

John hung his head and wandered on.

‘Indeed, I am unlucky,’ said he aloud. ‘I have no luck in anything.’

Scarcely had he uttered these words when he found himself in the midst of a big town. Never, not even in his dreams, had John beheld such splendour. Large streets, shops with looking-glasses in the windows (and what was there not in those windows?), huge palaces, churches with golden domes, shady gardens. And people everywhere—in the shops, about the streets, in the gardens. Some running, bustling, hurrying; others, leaning in their carriages, looking languidly and indifferently down upon those that were walking. Suddenly the noise and bustle ceased. A chariot drawn by horses white as snow appeared in the market-place. In

THE CHARIOT OF GLORY



South

front of the chariot, beside it, and behind, there walked trumpeters and drummers. In the middle of the chariot, her eyes fixed in front of her, stood a woman in a magnificent brocade dress, ornamented with silver and golden bells ; a crown of laurels was on her head. From her outstretched hands fell now a wreath, now a laurel branch, for which the crowd struggled ; soon there was a fight, the people pushed one another, and some of them fell under the horses. Now and then a lucky one managed to climb up and catch one of the branches thrown down. In the place of those who fell other people appeared, and at last the magic chariot rolled slowly onwards. Suddenly the woman's gaze fell upon the awe-struck, frightened face of John, who, holding his breath, stood leaning against a tree. She stopped the horses and asked, ' Who are you ? '

' I am Unlucky John, your Grace.'

' Why do you hide yourself ? All people are pushing towards me, and you hide yourself.'

' I am afraid of you,' timidly whispered John.

' You are afraid ? How was it, then, that you came here ? '

' It was quite unexpectedly that I wandered as far as this. I am walking about in order to find a god-mother for my son.'

The woman reflected a little while, then she said, ' Will you have me ? '

' And who are you ? '

' I am Glory.'

' I want a just godmother.'

' Do you think I am not just ? '

John shook his head.

' Certainly not,' said he, with a sigh. ' Only see how many people perish on your account. You ride about with a smile on your face. Everybody thinks it is meant for him. But, as for you, you are merely tempting the people, and you do not even hear the

cries of those who fall underneath the wheels of your chariot.'

'Savage! Return to your forest!' proudly exclaimed the Fairy, and, whipping up the horses, she hurried away like a whirlwind.

John wandered on, and came to a place where some criminals were being executed. Here he saw an old woman of stern aspect who slowly stepped forward, holding scales in one hand and a small ivory wand in the other.

The old woman looked at John, and thus spoke to him in a stern voice: 'Eh, young man, where are you hurrying to?'

'I am looking out for a godmother for my boy.'

'A godmother! Well, then, listen. I have taken a fancy to you, and am willing to be godmother to your child.'

'I thank you for the honour,' cautiously replied John. 'Only who are you, madam? For, you see, I should like to get one that is just.'

'Well and good! For, you see, I am—Justice!'

'Justice!' exclaimed John, full of terror. 'Lord have mercy on us! So it is you who preside over courts and pass judgment at trials?'

'Yes, it is I.'

'Oh, no; it will not do at all! For you are much too harsh and, see rightly. More than once, madam, have you executed innocent people while murderers were set at liberty by you. It also happens that you sometimes punish just because some one may have crossed your path whom you do not like. No, no, I do not wish you as a godmother to my son.'

'You wretch! You are offending Justice. Wait, I will pay you for this!'

However, Unlucky John had a pair of strong legs. He ran away as fast as he could, without looking behind,

and when he stopped in order to catch breath he found himself in a cemetery.



And suddenly a woman stood before him, wrapped in a white shroud, and with tresses falling down upon her

shoulders. The shroud also covered her face, and when she walked her limbs made a dry, crackling noise, like the pattering of hail upon the roof.

‘Where are you off to, my man?’ she asked.

‘I am looking for a godmother for my son.’

‘Take me.’

‘I want a just one.’

‘More just than I you will not find.’

‘Ah, dear lady, many say so. And who are you?’

‘I am Death.’

John paused a second, and then said: ‘Indeed, it is true what you say. You are really just. To you all are equal—young and old, rich and poor, lord or commoner, prince or peasant. The hour strikes, and you carry off all, taking no heed of either tears or prayers. You are not to be enticed by promises, nor bribed by gold or silver. You knock at all doors, and when you say, “Come!” one must obey. Yes, you are just; one may trust you. Be, then, the godmother of my son.’

And Unlucky John, taking Death by the hand, led her into his hut, and Death stood godmother to his son. After the ceremony was over, John gave a feast, and they ate and drank in the small hut until late in the night.

When the time came to take leave, Death said to John: ‘You are a good man, my friend, and as a reward for your confidence in me I will help you. I will teach you a profession which will make you rich.’

‘What kind of profession is that?’ asked John, in surprise.

‘Medicine.’

‘A doctor? I? But I cannot even read and write!’

‘That’s nothing. You merely listen to what I tell you. When you are called to a patient you first of all look at the head of the bed. If you see me without

tresses then you will know that the patient will recover his health, and you can give him what you like—even pure water—you will cure him. But when the shadow on the wall reflects my tresses, then all is over : call for the priest.'

Thus it was settled. Death went away. John bought himself a black suit and a hat and became a doctor. He was very bold, and boldness, as every one knows, is the sister of success, and thus John became famous and was called to patients from far and wide. He examined the pulse and, mindful of the order given to him by Death, he was never mistaken. When he said of a patient, 'That's all right ; he'll get over it,' everybody knew already that he would live. His fame grew, not day by day, but hour by hour. Gold rained, as it were, upon John, and he became very wealthy.

His son grew up a nice boy. John, on the contrary, grew old, and his hair turned quite grey. From time to time, when Death happened to be on business in the neighbourhood, she called to see her godson and his father, who now lived in a magnificent palace. On these occasions an extra fowl was added to the dinner repast, and one or two bottles of wine were uncorked. Death petted her godson, took some snuff out of John's snuff-box, and went away.

Once Death said to the doctor, 'I frequently call on you, but you, dear friend, have never paid me a visit yet.'

'There's plenty of time yet,' replied John, with a forced smile. 'Should I come to you—who knows ?—perhaps you may not want to let me return again.'

'Oh, no ; I never take any one before his time. You know how just I am ; therefore don't be afraid, and come to me to supper.'

After some time had passed by, John at last decided to call upon his friend. He met her in the forest and they went together. They walked over hills and dells

and through thick forests. At last Death brought John to a deserted place, whereon was erected a gloomy palace, the walls of which were dark and covered all over with ivy.

'Here we are at home,' said Death, opening the door and allowing her friend to step in first.

'It's time we were home,' moaned Unlucky John; 'I can scarcely hold myself on my legs.'

Death placed a supper before her guest and also put some wine on the table. When he had finished eating, and after he had rested a little while, she led him into a large parlour and paused near the window. Through this window one could survey a vast expanse of space, strewn all over with thousands of candles, stuck in the ground.

Meanwhile, night had overtaken them. Numberless candles were lighted up, illuminating the darkness with a mysterious glare. There were all sorts of candles here—large, middle-sized, and quite small ones. Some of them scarcely smouldered, others burnt evenly, while others flashed with a bright, dazzling light.

John was greatly struck by this spectacle.

'Heavens!' he exclaimed, and, after a short pause, he asked his hostess, 'What is the meaning of all these candles?'

'These are the lights of life,' said Death.

'The lights of life? What does it mean? I don't quite understand.'

'You will soon understand. Every being living on earth has got here his or her light.'

'Ah, that's what it means,' murmured John. 'But why are they all so different from one another? Some large, others small; some glittering, others scarcely visible?'

'Because in life, too, it is like this. One is growing, another is in the full possession of his strength and powers, while a third is already dying away. Every

day children are born into this world and old people are dying.'

'I see,' muttered John, who felt a cold shiver creep down his back. 'Just there—opposite—is a grand candle.'

'This is the light of a new-born child.'



'And this? How it glitters!'

'This light belongs to a youth of twenty years of age.'

'Tell me, dear friend,' said John timidly, 'where, then, is my light?'

'Here, in front of you.'

'Impossible!' cried he, turning pale. 'But the whole of its wick is nearly burnt up!'

‘Yes, my poor friend ; to you are left but three more days of life.’

‘What ? What did you say ? Only three days ! Look here, Death, we are friends, are we not ? Is it not possible to give me a longer life ? Indeed, are you not mistress here ? Make my light a little bigger ; take a little wax off this big candle and add on to mine.’

‘I cannot. It is the light of your son. It would be unjust were I to fulfil your desire, and, you know, I am justice itself.’

‘It’s true,’ sighed John, hanging his head.

‘All I can do for you,’ said Death, ‘is to make you still older, in order that it may be easier for you to die.’

And, indeed, when Unlucky John returned home, he was so old, so infirm, that he fell on the steps of his staircase, just like a heap of ashes, at the very moment when, in the palace of the just godmother, his light died out.

Adapted from the Russian by Dora Zhook.

HOW THE SIAMESE AMBASSADORS REACHED THE CAPE

WHILE the English Kings during the fifteenth century were trying to get possession of the whole of France or fighting for the crown of England, their cousins in Portugal were sending out expeditions over the Atlantic, discovering lands containing undreamed-of wonders down the coasts of Africa, and establishing a settlement in the west of India at the town of Goa. Once there, the merchants did not rest till they had sailed round the Indian peninsula and on to Burmah and Siam, seeking markets for their European goods, and buying in exchange all kinds of rich stuffs and beautiful things made in the East.

Somewhere towards the end of the seventeenth century the King of Portugal fitted out an embassy to the King of Siam for the purpose of making a fresh treaty with him, and in 1684 the King of Siam felt it was his duty to return it.

So he chose out three of his greatest mandarins or nobles and six others not quite so great, and a large number of servants and attendants to wait on them, and informed them that in the month of March they were to go on board a ship commanded by a Portuguese captain and set sail for Europe. Of course everything was to be as magnificent as possible, and the presents he provided were to be finer than any that had been seen before. They were to halt first at Goa, and then take

the long voyage round the Cape of Good Hope. One of the mandarins was called Occum Chamnam, and he has written an account of all their strange and terrible adventures both by sea and land.

It was the intention of the King of Siam that the ship in which the embassy embarked should reach Goa in time to join the trading fleet for Europe ; but owing to terrific storms and ignorant pilots it was five months on the way, and when at last the captain cast anchor in Goa harbour it was only to learn that the fleet had already started and they must wait for the next. The Siamese gentlemen were well treated, and enjoyed seeing the splendid houses and churches and being entertained by the Portuguese viceroy at the expense of his master.

It was in January 1686 that they set forth once more in a vessel manned by 150 men, containing besides passengers of all nations.

For three months they sailed the Indian Ocean, and at the end of April sighted some land, declared by both pilots and sailors to be the Cape of Good Hope. Certainly, the Portuguese seamen of that day must have been very different from their forefathers who had won such fame, for these men seem to have been both stupid and careless. The ship rounded the promontory which they imagined to be the Cape, and then steered to the north. No look-out was kept, and both crew and passengers went to bed with light hearts. One among them was, however, unable to sleep, and this was Occum Chamnam, the Siamese.

Finding the cabin that he shared with several others very hot, he went on deck. The sky was clear and there was a bright moon, but as he looked round him he was startled to see a huge dark mass close on their right. He instantly roused the pilot, who, exclaiming ' Land ! Land ! ' ordered the steersman to put down the helm, but no sooner had the order been obeyed than the ship struck on a rock and was held fast there.

Now that it was too late everything possible was done, but it was of no use. She began to fill rapidly, and the deck was a scene of the wildest confusion. Some seized empty casks or sails or ropes—anything that came to hand, and threw themselves into the sea, where they all perished ; others made rafts of the planks and masts which had been cut away and trusted to them to be carried on shore. Among these was Occum Chamnam, who had prudently put on his two ‘ good habits ’ or best suits of clothes, while the second ambassador (a noted swimmer) succeeded in reaching land with his despatches tied to a sabre.

In one way or another about two hundred people saved themselves from the wreck, but they seemed only to have exchanged one death for another, as they had nothing to eat or drink, and very little to cover them. Even the ‘ two good habits ’ did not keep Occum Chamnam from shivering, so he returned to the ship, (which was still above water,) on a hurdle to see what he could find in the way of garments and provisions, not for himself alone but for the unfortunate victims on the rock, some of whom were literally naked. But the sea had forced its way into nearly every part of the vessel, and nothing was to be got but some pieces of gold stuff, a small case with six flasks of wine, and some biscuit. These he fastened on the hurdle and set out for the rock. The gold stuffs he at once gave to the Siamese to wrap themselves in, and strange indeed their gorgeous clothes must have looked in that desolate place, while the biscuit was equally divided.

This done, a council was held, and it was decided to move forward at once, before the men were too weak from hunger to walk. Luckily, the Portuguese had brought away with them some muskets, with powder and shot, both for protection against the Kaffirs, and for the purpose of shooting game. Both the captain and the pilots declared that the Dutch settlement at the

Cape of Good Hope could not possibly be more than twenty miles distant, and their hearers were only too anxious to believe them.

‘In a couple of days at most we shall be there,’ said these blind guides, who were to be proved as ignorant of the land as they were of the sea. ‘Only a couple of days ; therefore leave any food you have got behind you, except just what you need for that time.’

Trusting in this foolish advice, the little company started on their journey, without even carrying water with them. The sun was hot, and even with two halts they made but slow progress. At length at four o’clock they reached a large pond, and here they flung themselves down and quenched their raging thirst, after which they felt strong enough to catch some crabs, which they boiled on the fire. Then they stretched themselves out and went to sleep, and the Dutch settlement appeared as far off as ever.

Now the Siamese nobles were not used to walking, or indeed to exercise of any kind, and they suffered from the hardships far more than the Portuguese or other Europeans. The chief of the ambassadors in particular was old and weak, and it was with great difficulty that he was dragged along. A plan of march was agreed on and the party divided into four. First went the Portuguese, in whose steps the rest were to follow, and who were never to be lost sight of by the next in order, so that all might keep in touch one with the other. But this arrangement was soon upset by the Siamese ambassador protesting that he was too ill to go any further, and that he wished the remainder of his countrymen to leave him where he was and join the rest. When they reached the Dutch town, which by this time could not be far off, they could send him some food, and a litter to carry him, if he was still alive.

The Siamese were much troubled when they heard his words, but they felt he was right. Yet it seemed a

dreadful thing to leave a sick man to die of starvation alone in a desert spot. They were still hesitating, when a boy of fifteen, son of the ambassador's oldest friend, flung himself on his knees on the ground, and declared that whatever the old man's fate might be, he would share it, and as one of the servants offered to remain also, the others departed with comparatively light hearts, promising to return as soon as possible.

But with the best will in the world they appeared never to get nearer the Cape. In vain they toiled after the Portuguese, who travelled much faster than they; it was with the greatest difficulty that they reached their halting place on the top of a high mountain, and, half dead from exhaustion, sank to sleep beside the fire. Next day, Occum Chamnam was so weak from hunger that during the march he several times fell down unconscious, and would have died where he lay had it not been for the kindness of another mandarin. In their extremity, one of the party ate some leaves he found by the stream, and finding that they satisfied his pangs, bade the rest do likewise.

They had now been travelling five days, and each morning they confidently expected their journey to end before sunset. At one moment their hopes were raised high by the sight of some men on the horizon. 'The Dutch,' they said with a smile, but alas! they were no Dutch, but Hottentots armed with spears. They came quite close, but when they beheld such a large number of men, they altered their minds as to the wisdom of attacking them, and made signs to the Portuguese to follow them to their village. 'Surely we shall get some food at last,' was the thought of every man, but the villagers were too much occupied in staring at the Siamese, and at what was left of the gold stuffs, to have leisure to attend to them. At length the starving guests could contain themselves no longer, and

opening their mouths wide, pointed to them, and then to the sheep and oxen grazing on the rich grass. The Hottentots understood clearly, but only shook their heads; 'Tabac,' 'Patacas,' was all they would say, and two large diamonds offered by Occum Chamnam were scornfully put aside. Happily the pilot possessed some 'patacas,' the only coin whose existence they knew of, and in exchange for four of these they gave him an ox. But as he divided it solely among his own countrymen the Portuguese, the rest were not better off.

In this sad plight a brilliant idea darted into the mind of one of the mandarins. He knew that though savage races often were ignorant of the value of money, they were always very fond of ornaments which they could hang about them. Therefore he fastened some gold clasps and buckles he had with him into his hair, and walked carelessly among the Hottentots, who instantly crowded round him, pointing to his head. At first he took no notice, but this only made them more greedy. Then he pointed to a sheep, and to one of the ornaments. They answered by signs that in return for a clasp they would give him a quarter of sheep, and though this was much less than he expected or wanted, it was better than nothing.

Emboldened by this, another Hottentot approached Occum Chamnam, and fixed his eyes on the gold buttons the Siamese was wearing.

'You may have it in exchange for some food,' signed Occum Chamnam, and the Hottentot nodded, and beckoned to him to follow.

'Perhaps I shall be lucky, and get a whole sheep for myself,' thought the Siamese; but he was not lucky at all, and had to be contented with a small earthen pot of milk. Even the Portuguese saw that they would gain no advantage by staying on with the Hottentots, and gave orders that next day they should continue their march by way of the coast.

That night no one went to bed, for the Hottentots were holding counsel and dancing their war dance till daybreak, and at any moment the strange camp might be attacked. At sunrise the word of command was given, and the foreigners started southwards, determined to follow the line of the shore, where they were thankful to find the rocks covered with mussels. These they ate greedily, and collected a large store to carry with them.

By this time both the captain and the pilots had confessed—what everybody else knew—that they had not the faintest idea where they were, or how far from the Dutch settlement. After talking over the matter with the mandarins, it was decided that the expedition should henceforward stick to the coast, where they could at least be certain of finding enough shell-fish to feed them, together with water from the rivers which flowed into the sea. When they reached the coast they were further cheered by the sight of a high mountain, which they were assured by the pilots was the Cape of Good Hope, but this turned out to be as untrue as before, as the company discovered when they reached it.

It was only on their arrival at the place of halt, which was happily close to the seashore, that one of the mandarins was discovered to be missing. Unlike the rest, he had been unable to eat the leaves and flowers which had kept them alive, and, too weak to march over the rough ground, had fallen unperceived out of the ranks. This was not the first man to whom such a thing had happened, and Occum Chamnam observes that though at any other time he would have wept bitterly over his friend, his thoughts were now entirely absorbed in wondering if he should ever live to reach the Dutch settlement.

An evening of mist followed by drenching rain reduced them to the last stage of misery. At any rate they felt as if they could suffer no more, till the morning

dawned and they saw that during the night the Portuguese had abandoned them. At this last blow everything grew ten times worse, and they were too wretched even to speak ; but from this stupor of despair they were roused by a speech of the second ambassador. It was he and not his chief, the old man they had been forced to desert, who was the real leader. It was he who had swum with his master's credentials from the wreck to the mainland ; who had fastened them to a stick on the highest part of whatever mountain they were encamped on, or on the plains had tied them to the top of the tallest plant. Now, in case of his death, he bade his successor take the same care as he had done, to preserve his master's despatches from insult, and if need be, to bury them in some secret place. Meanwhile they were to take courage and pursue their way.

' We walked very quickly,' says Occum Chamnam, ' at least what seemed quick to us, though in fact our progress was but slow, and at mid-day we arrived on the banks of a river about sixty feet wide.' In their anxiety to get on and to join the Portuguese, whom they imagined to be on the other side, some of the Siamese plunged in, but the current was so swift that it was all they could do to struggle back to shore. They were, however, resolved to cross somehow, and at length one of the mandarins, who was a famous swimmer, bade them knot all their scarves together, and undertook to carry the line over and tie it to a tree, so that the rest might have a rope to cling to when they made the passage. But the rush of the water was too much even for him. The line was torn from his grasp and he was swept against a rock on the other side, where he regained his feet, badly hurt and with his shoulder much bruised. As soon as he was able to stand, he walked some distance up the stream, where the river was calm, and then swam back to his companions. All this time they had nothing but water to support them, and were even reduced to

boiling Occum Chamnam's old shoes till the leather was quite soft ; they then carved them and gave each man a small piece, trying to think they were only eating very tough mutton. Strange to say 'it was not intolerable,' and they were emboldened to cook a cap belonging to one of the attendants. But though the cap was broiled almost to a cinder, it was too hard even for shipwrecked men to eat.

Following the river, the Siamese came upon the dead body of one of their interpreters, all of whom had disappeared with the Portuguese. By now the condition of the little party was so desperate that they decided that they had better offer themselves to the Hottentots—should they find any—as slaves ; and meantime they would go back to the seashore, where at least they could get mussels and fresh water.

Little though they guessed it, the sufferings of the poor people were nearly at an end. After resting a few days, and feeling quite strong after a diet of mussels, they set out again, and soon fell in with some friendly Hottentots, who had half a sheep with them. This they readily sold for six gold buttons, and the Siamese thought it cheap at the price when they sat down to the first good dinner they had eaten since they were wrecked.

The Hottentots signed to the men to follow them, but they were all so weak that even the strongest were unable to keep up, while seven out of the fifteen were so ill that they declared they could go no farther. The bad water, which was often all they could get, had so swollen their bodies that they hardly looked like human creatures, and they could not use their feet at all. Dreadful though it seemed to abandon them in such a plight, the remaining men resolved to leave all the dried mussels they had brought with them for the sick, and pushed on in search of the Dutch.

It is amazing that people in their condition could

have endured another six days of perpetual suffering and have been able to climb precipices 'terrific even to look at.' Two of the Hottentots left them, in order, it was found later, to carry news of their approach to the Dutch. At the moment, however, the Siamese believed that they had gone to betray them, and wished to put to death the third who had remained. But the second ambassador who was still living was horrified at the suggestion, and the others were much ashamed at having made it.

On the thirty-first day after the shipwreck the two Hottentots returned, bringing two Dutchmen with them and, what was much more precious, plenty of food. The gratitude felt by the starving castaways was boundless, and as a token of thankfulness Occum Chamnam presented each of the Dutchmen with a large diamond set in a ring.

At last their sufferings were ended, for soon carts came to carry them to the nearest houses, and more wagons and provisions were sent for those who had been left behind, while the first ambassador and his companions were not forgotten. After four months of rest they were able to proceed on their way, and this time the winds and the waves were favourable, and they landed in Europe without any further adventures.

*THE STRANGE TALE OF AMBROSE
GWINETT*

I WAS born (writes Ambrose Gwinett, the hero of this story) of respectable parents in the city of Canterbury, where my father lived at the sign of the Blue Anchor. He had but two children, a daughter and myself, and having given me a good education, at the age of sixteen he bound me apprentice to Mr. George Roberts, an attorney in our town, with whom I stayed four years and three-quarters.

My sister being grown up, had now been married something more than a twelvemonth to one Sawyer, a sailor, who having got a good deal of prize money and two hundred pounds as my sister's dowry, quitted his profession and set up a public-house within three miles of his birthplace, which was Deal.

I had frequent invitations to go and pass a short time with them ; and in the autumn of the year 1709, having obtained my master's consent, I left the city of Canterbury on foot the 17th day of September.

Through some delays on the road it was late before I reached Deal, and so tired was I that had my life depended on it I could not have got as far as my sister's that night. At this time there were many of her Majesty's ships lying in the harbour, for the English were then at war with the French and Spaniards ; besides which I found this was the day for holding the yearly fair, so that the town was filled so full that a bed

was not to be got for love or money. I went seeking a lodging from house to house to no purpose, till, being quite spent, I returned to the public-house where I had first made enquiry, desiring leave to sit by their kitchen fire and rest myself till morning.

The publican and his wife happened to be acquainted with my brother and sister, and finding by my conversation that I was a relation of theirs, and going to visit them, the landlady presently said she would endeavour to get me a bed, and going out of the kitchen she quickly called me into a back parlour. Here I saw sitting by the fire a middle-aged man in a dressing-gown and cap, who was reckoning money at a table. 'Uncle,' said the woman as soon as I entered, 'this is a brother of our friend Mrs. Sawyer; he cannot get a bed anywhere and is tired after a long journey. You are the only one that lies in this house alone: will you give him part of yours?' To this the man answered that she knew he had been ill, and consequently a bedfellow could not be very agreeable. 'However,' said he, 'rather than the young man shall sit up he is welcome to sleep with me.' After this we sat awhile together, when having put his money in a canvas bag, and the bag into the pocket of his dressing-gown, he took the candle and I followed him up to bed.

How long I slept I cannot be certain, but I imagine it was about three o'clock in the morning when I awoke with a violent pain. My bedfellow, who was awake, observing that I was very uneasy, asked me what was the matter. I informed him that I was feeling very sick, and would go into the garden, hoping that the air might revive me.

'The front door is apt to stick,' added he, 'so I will give you a knife to help you open it.' So saying he put his hand into his waistcoat pocket, which lay on the bed, and gave me the knife.

I hurried on a few of my clothes and went down-

stairs. On unclasping the knife to open the door a piece of money which stuck between the blade and the groove in the handle fell into my hand. I did not examine what it was, nor indeed could I well see, there being but a very faint moonlight, so I put them together carelessly in my pocket.

I must have stayed in the garden pretty near a quarter of an hour. When I returned to the room I was surprised to find my bedfellow gone. I called several times, but receiving no answer I went to bed, and again fell asleep.

About six o'clock I arose, nobody yet being up in the house. The gentleman was not yet returned to bed, or, if he was, had again left it. I dressed myself with what haste I could, being impatient to see my sister, and, the bill being paid over-night, I let myself out at the street door.

Having got to my sister's she and her husband received me. About eleven o'clock in the forenoon, when standing at the door, my brother-in-law being by my side, we saw three horsemen galloping towards us. As soon as they came up to the house they stopped, and one of them alighting suddenly seized me by the collar, crying, 'You are the Queen's prisoner.' I desired to know my crime. He said I should learn that as soon as I came to Deal, where I must immediately go with them. One of them then told my brother that the night before I had committed a murder and robbery.

Then a warrant was produced, and I was carried back to Deal by the three men, my brother with another friend accompanying us.

Being arrived in town, I was immediately hurried to the house where I had slept. We were met at the door by a crowd of people, every one crying, 'Which is he? Which is he?' As soon as I entered I was accosted by the publican's wife in tears. 'Oh, cursed wretch, what have you done?' cried she. 'You

have murdered and robbed my poor dear uncle, and all through me, who put you to lie with him ! But where have you hid his money and what have you done with his body ? You shall be hanged on a gallows as high as a maypole ! ’

My brother begged her to be quiet, and I was taken into a private room and asked where I had put the money and how I had disposed of the body. I enquired what money and whose body they meant. I was answered that I had killed the person I had lain with the preceding night, for the sake of a large sum of money I had seen with him. I fell down upon my knees, calling God to witness I knew nothing of what they accused me. Then somebody cried, ‘ Carry him upstairs,’ and I was brought into the chamber where I had slept. Here the man of the house went to the bed, and, turning down the clothes, showed the sheets, pillow, and bolster dyed in blood. He asked me did I know anything of that. I declared to God I did not. A person in the room said : ‘ Young man, something very odd must have passed here last night ; for, lying in the next chamber, I heard groanings and going up and down stairs more than once or twice.’ I then told them of my illness, and that I had been up and down myself, with all that passed between my bedfellow and me. Somebody proposed to search me ; several began to turn my pockets inside out, and from my waistcoat tumbled the knife and the piece of money already mentioned, which I had entirely forgot. Upon seeing these the woman immediately screamed out, ‘ There’s my uncle’s knife ! ’ and picked up the money, and called the people about her. ‘ Here,’ said she, ‘ is what puts the villain’s guilt beyond a doubt. I can swear to this William and Mary guinea ; my uncle has long had it by way of a curiosity, and engraved the first letters of his name upon it.’

She then began to cry afresh, while I could do nothing but continue to call Heaven to witness that I

was as innocent as the child unborn. The constable who had heard me mention having gone down into the garden told the people I must have thrown the body down a disused hole which communicated with the sea. This everybody agreed to.

‘Then,’ said the master of the house, ‘it is in vain to look for the body any further, for there was a spring tide last night, which has carried it off.’

The consequence of these proceedings was an immediate examination before a justice of the peace, after which I suffered a long and severe imprisonment in the county town of Maidstone. For some time my father, my master, and my relations were inclined to think me innocent, because I declared I was so, as well I might; and in compliance with my earnest request an advertisement was published in the *London Gazette*, representing my deplorable circumstances, and offering a reward to any person who could give tidings of Mr. Richard Collins (the man I was supposed to have murdered), either alive or dead. No information, however, of any kind coming to hand, at the assizes I was brought to trial, and facts appearing strong against me, I received sentence to be carried in a cart on the Wednesday fortnight following to the town of Deal, and there to be hanged before the innkeeper’s door where I had committed the murder, and my body to be hung in chains within a stone’s throw of my brother’s house.

The Monday was now arrived before the fatal day when an end was to be put to my miseries. I was called down into the court of the prison; but I own I was not a little shocked when I found it was to take the measure of the irons in which I was to be hung after execution. A fellow-prisoner appeared before me in the same woeful plight (he had robbed the mail), and the smith was measuring him when I came down, while the gaoler, with as much calmness as if he had been

ordering a pair of shoes for his daughter, was giving directions in what manner the irons should be made, so as to support the man, who was remarkably heavy and corpulent.

Between this and the day of execution I spent my time alone in prayer and meditation.

At length Wednesday morning came, and about three o'clock I was put in a cart ; but sure such a day of wind, rain, and thunder never blew out of the heavens. When we arrived at Deal it became so violent that the sheriff and his officers could scarce sit on their horses ; for my own part, I was insensible of every object about me. But I heard the sheriff whisper to the executioner to make what haste he could. The man nodded, and tucked me up like a log of wood, as if unconscious of what he was doing.

I can give no account of what I felt when hanging, as I only remember, after having the rope put round my neck, something flashing round me like a blaze of fire ; nor do I know how long I hung, but my brother afterwards told me that in half an hour the sheriff's officers all went off, and I was cut down by the executioner. But when he came to put the irons upon me it was found that those prepared for the other man, which were too large for me, had been sent instead of mine. This they remedied by stuffing rags between my body and the hoops, after which I was taken to the place appointed and hung on a gibbet ready prepared.

The cloth over my face, being slightly tied, was soon detached by the wind, and probably its blowing on my face hastened my recovery ; certain it is that after a while I came to myself.

The gibbet being placed at one corner of a field where my sister's cows were, a lad came to drive them home for evening milking. The creatures, which were feeding almost under me, brought him near the gibbet. In the very moment he looked up he saw me open my

eyes and move my under jaw. He immediately ran home to inform the people at his master's. At first they hardly believed his story; but at length my brother and others came out, and by the time they got to the field I was so much alive that my groans were very loud.

In their confusion, the first thing they thought of was a ladder. One of my brother's men getting up, put his hand on my breast and felt my heart beating strongly. But it was found impossible to detach me from the gibbet without cutting it down. Accordingly a saw was got for that purpose, and in less than half an hour, having freed me from my irons, they got me bled and put into a warm bed.

It is amazing that though above eight persons were entrusted with this affair, and I remained three days in the place after it happened, not one betrayed the secret. Early next morning it was known that the gibbet was cut down, and it occurred to everybody that it was done by my relations to draw a veil over their shame by burying the body; but when my brother was summoned before the mayor, and denied knowing anything of the matter, little more stir was made about it.

Being thus delivered from an ignominious death, the next difficulty was how to dispose of my life, now I had regained it. To stay in England was impossible without exposing myself to the terrors of the law. In this dilemma a fortunate circumstance occurred. There had lain at my brother's house some of the principal officers of a privateer that was preparing for a cruise, and just then ready to sail. The captain took me on board with him as clerk and assistant purser, my friends providing me with food and clothes, while my sister gave me ten guineas.

We had been six months out upon a cruise, and were on the coast of Florida, then in the hands of the Spaniards,

when we fell in with a squadron of their men-of-war, and were captured without striking a blow, and brought prisoners into the harbour of St. Helen's. I was really tired of my life, and should have been glad to have ended it in the dungeon where, with forty others of my countrymen, the enemy had put me. But after three years' confinement we were let out, in order to be set on board transports to be conveyed to Pennsylvania, and from thence to England. This was a disagreeable sentence to me, as I feared that a return home would mean a return to the gallows. Being by now a tolerable master of the Spanish language, I begged to be left behind, which favour I obtained through the master of the prison, who not only took me into his house as soon as my countrymen were gone, but in a short time procured me the post of deputy-governor, with a small salary.

At this particular time the office was by no means agreeable. The coast had been long infested with pirates, the most desperate gang of villains that can be imagined ; and scarce a month passed but one or other of their vessels fell into the governor's hands, when the crew as constantly were put under my care. Once I very narrowly escaped being knocked on the head by one of the ruffians and having the keys taken from me ; another time I was shot at ; but in each case I escaped unhurt.

I had been in my office about three months, when a ship arrived from Port Royal, another Spanish settlement on the coast, with several English captives on board. As they were coming from the port to the governor's house something struck me as familiar in the face of one of the prisoners. I could not then stop them, but about an hour afterwards they were brought to the prison till the governor signified his further pleasure.

As soon as the poor creatures found I was an English-

man they were extremely happy. I then had an opportunity of taking notice of the man whose face I thought I knew, though I could not recollect where I had seen him. All at once I knew: it was the man I was supposed to have murdered.

The next morning I told the prisoners that if any of them had a mind to go about the town I would procure them permission and go with them. This greatly pleased them, and we all set out, the man I was thought to have murdered walking beside me, the three other prisoners walking a little in front. When we were alone I looked him in the face and asked, 'Sir, were you ever at Deal?' and as I spoke he put his hand on my shoulder and tears came into his eyes. 'Sir,' said I again, 'if you are the man I take you for you here see one of the most unfortunate of human kind. Pray, is your name Richard Collins?' 'Yes,' he answered. 'Then,' I replied, 'I was hanged and gibbeted in England for your murder!'

These words struck him dumb with surprise, but when he had recovered himself he implored me to tell him all that had happened to me from the time we parted. When he heard how I had been hanged and afterwards hung in chains he would hardly believe me.

'Well, young man,' he said at last, 'if *you* have suffered, do not imagine that *I* have escaped. Now you shall hear my story.

'When you left me in bed I lay still for some time, feeling faint and ill and as if I was about to die. I groaned aloud, and cried out, hoping that some one might hear me, but no one came. Then accidentally I put my hand to my left arm—the arm in which I had been bled the morning before, and found that the bandage had slipped, and blood was flowing from the wound. Knowing that I really should die if the bleeding were not stopped, I mustered all my strength and got up, with my

dressing-gown loose about me, in order to go to the man who had bled me, to have my arm tied up again. When I got into the street a band of men, armed with cutlasses and hangers, came and seized me, and hurried me to the beach. I begged and prayed, but they soon silenced my cries by clapping a gag in my mouth. At first I took them for a press-gang, though I soon discovered they belonged to a privateer, aboard which they immediately dragged me. But before I got thither I fainted away from loss of blood. The surgeon of the ship, I suppose, tied up my arm, for when my senses returned I was lying in a hammock and somebody was feeling my pulse. The vessel being then under way I asked where I was. They said I was safe enough. I immediately called for my dressing-gown, which was brought me, but a large sum of money in the pocket was gone. I complained to the captain of the robbery his men had committed, but he laughed and said I should soon have prize money enough to make up for it, so I was obliged to submit, and for three months was forced to work before the mast. At last we met the same fate that befell you, and with adventures like your own. That is my story. I am on my way home, and if you will accompany me it will give me great happiness.'

So now I could prove my innocence there was nothing to prevent my returning to England, which I had thought never to see again. The ship was due to sail in ten days, and Mr. Collins and I determined to embark in it. When I told my master of my intended departure he did not dissuade me from it, because it enabled him to get my office for one of his kinsmen, to whom on the same day I delivered up my trust. Strange to say, that very night the pirates seized on my young successor while he was locking up the wards, and taking the keys from him left him for dead while they made their escape.

On November 18, 1712, I sent my trunk on board the *Nuestra Señora*, Michael Deronza captain. About seven o'clock that evening, being in company with Señor Gaspar, my master, a lad came up and said the boat had been waiting for me some time and Mr. Collins was already on board. I ran into the house to take leave of the family, and then hastened to the quay, but found the boat had put off, and left word I was to overtake them at a little bay further down the coast. I ran along the shore till I thought I caught sight of the boat. I shouted as loud as I could; they answered and put about to take me in, but we had scarce got fifty yards from land when on looking for Mr. Collins I missed him. This astonished me, and I examined more closely the faces of the men, discovering to my horror that instead of getting on board my own boat, which I could see a considerable way ahead, I had got into a boat belonging to the pirates. I attempted to leap overboard, but was prevented by one of the crew, who gave me a stroke on the head which laid me senseless.

With these pirates I continued some years, till they, upon a dispute, threw me overboard, and I certainly should have been drowned had I not been picked up by a Spanish vessel. After various misfortunes our ship was taken by an Algerine rover; the greater part of the crew was killed, and the rest, I among them, taken prisoners, after having lost one of my legs in the action.

After this I passed a long and painful slavery in Algiers, till with other English captives I was released by agreement between the Dey of Algiers and his Britannic Majesty. In the year 1730 I at length returned to England. The first thing I did was to enquire after my relations, but learned that all those nearest to me were dead, and that Mr. Collins had never returned home, nor did I ever hear what became of him.

From 'The Arminian Magazine.'

WITH THE REDSKINS

How many of the people who travel in the large, prosperous towns in the east of the United States, and particularly in New England, know anything of the lives led by the early settlers who came out to make fresh homes for themselves across the seas during the seventeenth century? Yet these lives were as full of danger and strange adventures as those of any of the colonists planted out by Greece or Rome in foreign lands, while, unlike the ancient colonists, the new ones had a bitter climate of frost and cold to fight against.

Think what it must have been to a shipload of passengers to be put on shore on the edge of some dense forest teeming with wild beasts, of whose very names they were ignorant, knowing that the long and icy winter must shortly be upon them. If they could not manage to cut down the trees and make a clearing for a vegetable garden, and build themselves a stout wooden house, with a large stock of logs for burning, before the first snow fell they would probably be all frozen to death. And in the forests dwelt another enemy more to be dreaded than any wild beast, who was only spoken of in whispers and with paling faces—the terrible Red Indians.

From time to time the different tribes joined together to raid some small cluster of huts which formed a township, and after killing and burning to their hearts' content carried away many prisoners, hoping by and

bye to sell them for large ransoms. To the Englishmen, accustomed to the buff leather jerkins and steel helmets of Cromwell's soldiers, or the scarlet coats and broad hats of the royal troops, the sight of these dark-skinned, large-nosed warriors, smeared with paint, their heads crowned with feathers, and riding like the wind, was as strange as it was appalling. It may be truly said that the early settlers lived with fear beside them, and no man left his family when business called him elsewhere without feeling he might never see them again.

Some of the prisoners taken on these expeditions have written accounts of their captivity, and one of the most interesting of these was compiled by Mrs. Rowlandson, the wife of a clergyman who had built himself a house on a hill near the town of Lancaster, in the State of Massachusetts. In those days people did not mind sleeping several in a room, but even so the house must have been a good-sized one, as in February 1676 it contained forty-two persons, including five soldiers. On the evening of the 9th all was quiet, but about sunrise the noise of guns was heard, and every one rushed to the windows, only to behold the houses lower down the town a mass of flames, and an army of Indians, fifteen hundred in all, dancing about among them. Mr. Rowlandson himself was away, but his guests armed themselves with the muskets which always stood ready loaded, and buckled on their swords, while the women filled the leather fire buckets with water. This was all they could do, for they had not occupied the house very long, and it had no palisades or defences. Then they sat still and waited for the moment when the Indians, having destroyed everything below, should come on to them.

Most of us have learned that there is nothing so hard as to wait with our hands folded for something to happen, and it was a sort of relief when at last the watchers beheld the Indians climbing the hill. In a

little while they separated, some going into the barn and others hiding behind rocks, so that they could shoot at the house without running any risk of being hit themselves.

After a time, however, they got tired of this slow warfare, and setting alight some flax and hemp which had been stored in the barn flung it against the wooden beams of the dwelling. But one of the besieged put the fire out with a bucketful of water, so the Indians had to bring more dry hemp and try again in a fresh place. Those inside listened eagerly to hear if the logs caught, and their faces grew white as the wood began to crackle. A few minutes later the enemy sprang in with a shout, and a hand-to-hand fight followed.

Under cover of the confusion Mrs. Rowlandson and her sister, Mrs. Drew, gathered together their children and stole outside, hoping to escape into the forest unperceived. But such a shower of bullets met them that they were forced to go back again, and the poor lady who tells the story is filled with indignation at the laziness or cowardice of the 'six stout dogs, who would not stir, though at another time if an Indian had come to the door they were ready to fly upon him and tear him down.' Even had the stout dogs done their duty it would not have made much difference to the fate of the party, and between the fire and the bullets death stared them in the face. Some were shot down at once, others were wounded, and among these were Mrs. Rowlandson herself and her youngest child, whom she was carrying. The dead were left where they fell and the rest, twenty-five in number, taken captive.

Bleeding from the wound in her side, the poor woman was forced to drag herself to a hill about a mile away, where the Indians passed the night, shouting, singing, and dancing. As soon as it was light they started off again, the child being held on a horse before one of the Redskins. The wounds in its hand and

side were terribly painful, and it kept up a continuous moaning of 'I shall die, I shall die!' Scarcely able though she was to keep up with the rest of the party the mother took it in her arms again and hushed its cries. But, faint from loss of blood and lack of food, she soon stumbled and fell, and then the Indians had pity on her and placed them both on a horse. Unluckily the animal had no 'furniture' or saddle, and possibly also Mrs. Rowlandson was not a very good rider; at any rate 'as we were going down a steep hill we both fell over the horse's head, at which they, like inhuman creatures, laughed,' which perhaps was not wonderful.

To add to all these miseries snow began to fall, and at last the dreary march stopped, and a fire was lit, round which they clustered. The child was by this time in a violent fever, and indeed it was a marvel it remained alive at all, lying exposed all through that bitter night, and having touched nothing but a little cold water for more than three days. But they struggled on somehow, and at the next halting-place they found a prisoner who, Mrs. Rowlandson tells us, showed her how to heal her wounds by laying oak-leaves against them. The remedy sounds a simple one—if you could find an oak tree with leaves on it in the month of February—but, of course, the prisoner may have carried a store of dried leaves with him, guessing that they might be useful as long as the Indians were about.

Nine days after the beginning of her captivity little Sarah died, and was buried up on the hill. In her distress the mother found some comfort in seeing her eldest child, who was the first to be taken captive when the house was attacked, and happened to be at that moment in the same small Indian town. A day or two later her son Joseph appeared unexpectedly, 'and asked her how she did.' He also was a prisoner with a tribe about six miles away, and when his master had

started with the other braves to destroy a town the squaw had brought the boy to visit his mother. Throughout, we find many acts of kindness from the Indians towards their prisoners, but Mrs. Rowlandson never shows the least gratitude for them, neither does she ever appear to try to make friends with her captors. She seems terribly afraid of crossing rivers, and always tells us if she passed over on the rafts 'without wetting her foot,' or whether they were so ill-made that they let in water. The food, too, was a great trial to her, for at first provisions were very scarce, and hungry though she was 'it was very hard to get down their filthy trash.' Yet after three weeks of fasting, though she 'would think how formerly she would turn against this or that,' and that she 'could starve and die before she could eat such things,' they at last became 'pleasant and savoury to the taste. By and bye, as the spring approached, things improved. One of the Indians offered her two spoonfuls of meal, and another gave her half a pint of peas, 'which was worth more to her than many bushels at another time.' On the further side of the Connecticut River was a powerful chief called King Philip, to whom she paid a visit. Here she was offered a pipe, which she refused with some unwillingness.

'I had formerly used tobacco,' she says, 'but had left it since I was first taken. It seems to be a bait the Devil lays to make men waste their precious time. I remember with shame how formerly, when I had taken two or three pipes, I was presently ready for another; such a bewitching thing it is.'

All through her wanderings Mrs. Rowlandson contrived to carry wool and knitting pins with her, difficult as it must have been to manage. Little by little the Indians grew to think of her as a woman who could do many things which they could not, and applied to her for help. King Philip begged her to make a shirt

for his boy, and gave her a shilling for it, which she was allowed to keep. Full of envy at the sight of the shirt, a squaw ordered a second as a present for her husband, and handed her a quart of peas as the price.

Mrs. Rowlandson was not a person who found pleasure in giving for its own sake, or else she thought that red skins were not to be treated like white ones. She is very angry when a 'sorry Indian' up the river, hearing of her famous shirts, begs her to make one for him, and when she had done it 'would pay her nothing for it.' But if the sorry Indian imagined he was to get off the debt he was quite wrong. Whenever, in fetching water, Mrs. Rowlandson passed his wigwam, or hut, she was in the habit of 'putting him in mind and calling for her pay.' At last her continued visits wore away the determination of the Indian, and he agreed that if she would make a little shirt for his 'papoose' she should have a knife. This time all went smoothly. The knife was handed over, but she did not keep it long, as her master took a fancy to it. 'I was glad to think I had anything they would be pleased with,' adds Mrs. Rowlandson.

After a time some of the good lady's hatred of the Indians, with their foul looks, so different from the lovely faces of Christians, seems to have melted. She was surprised to find that when going to see her son, then not far from her, nobody did her any harm, while she speaks of little kindnesses shown her. One squaw gives her a piece of bear, and permits her to boil it in her kettle with ground nuts for a vegetable. 'I cannot but think how pleasant it was to me,' she writes. 'I have seen bear handsomely baked among the English, and some liked it, but the thought that it *was* bear made me tremble.' Captivity was teaching the clergyman's wife many useful lessons, and as they were now travelling in the direction of her old home her spirits rose and she was more inclined to be cheerful and friendly.

But she was destined to remain in captivity some weeks longer, till she almost despaired of ever becoming free again. The Indians wandered about, apparently without any settled plan, except to keep out of the way of the English army. Once or twice she had news of her husband from some one who had spoken with him. Mr. Rowlandson was 'very well, but very melancholy,' and she seems to have frequently seen her son. Although very fond of her own children the solemn little red papooses were of no interest to her, and she speaks of them in a very unkind and heartless way. When her mistress's papoose died in their encampment down the Connecticut River she remarks that 'there was one benefit in it, as it made more room in the wigwam,' and adds that 'next day there came a company to mourn and howl with the mother,' but that she herself 'could not much condole with them.'

In reading the account of her captivity and her endless travels one imagines that years must have passed, but it was barely two months after the attack on the Massachusetts house when Mrs. Rowlandson was sent home, in exchange for some bread and tobacco and twenty pounds besides. In Boston she met her husband and some of her other relations, and by and bye her daughter arrived, having escaped from the Indians by the help of a squaw. And there we will leave Mrs. Rowlandson. On her return her fellow Christians appeared full of good qualities—as full, indeed, as to her mind the Indians were of bad ones. Yet, hard-hearted and blinded with prejudice as she was, she was forced to bear witness that 'those roaring lions and savage bears [the Indians], who feared neither God nor man nor the Devil,' had never offered her 'the slightest violence either in word or action,' and that she came away 'in the midst of so many hundreds of enemies, and not a dog moved his tongue.'

Shortened from Drake's 'Indian Captivities.'

THE WRECK OF THE 'DRAKE'

ON a fine June morning, ninety years ago, the schooner *Drake*, commanded by Captain Baker, with a crew of fifty men on board, set sail, by order of the Admiral of the Newfoundland station, for the port of Halifax. For three days the vessel made good progress ; then, to the dismay of both captain and crew, one of the dense fogs for which the seas round Newfoundland are famous began to bear down upon them.

Now of all the disasters that can happen to a ship none is so terrifying as a thick fog. You can see nothing, you can hear nothing. Even now the loud screams of the siren seem hardly to reach beyond the deck ; the screws work slowly and cautiously, but it is as dangerous to stand still as to go on. You cannot tell on which side the peril may lie ; at one moment the ship appears alone in the seas, wrapped in darkness, and the next instant the shadowy form of a great hulk looms at her side, ready to run her down. And if this is so in these days think what it must have been ninety years ago, when almost all the vessels were sailing ships and there were no sirens or hooters.

Knowing what was likely to happen, Captain Baker lost no time in taking observations as to the latitude and longitude of the ship, so that he might be able to steer in the right direction. At first there was a light breeze behind them, and they contrived to make about sixty miles, but then the fog settled down again and

they could see nothing twenty yards away. For an hour and a half they proceeded, taking soundings as they went, lest they should strike upon some hidden rock, when suddenly a shout of 'Breakers ahead !' was raised by one of the men who had been told off to keep a look-out, and though every effort was made to stop the ship the waves rendered everything useless, and in a few minutes a grinding sound was heard and a violent shock ran from bow to stern : the vessel had struck.

'Cut away the masts,' was the captain's first order, and as calmly as if they had been sailing in smooth water the men obeyed him. But in spite of the vessel being lightened by the loss of the masts the sea poured into the hole which had been torn in the side, and she began to sink rapidly.

'Launch the cutter,' shouted the captain ; but the boat had hardly touched the surface when a great wave swept over her and she was seen no more.

At this disaster the captain's hopes of saving his men grew faint, though outwardly he was as calm as ever, and his crew gave no signs of fearing the death that could not be far off. Then the wind blew the fog a little to one side, and a small rock could be seen, not very distant from where they were. Without waiting for orders a sailor called Lennard seized a rope weighted with lead and jumped into the sea, intending to swim to the rock, but he was caught by a current flowing in the wrong direction and was hauled back on deck by his comrades.

'I will try the gig,' cried Turner, the boatswain ; 'it is our only chance.' So, with a rope round his body, he was lowered into the little boat, which was carried along till it was within a few feet of the rock. They watched eagerly, holding their breath, when a wave larger than the rest caught and lifted the boat and dashed it in pieces on the rock. For a moment they strained their eyes in silence, then they saw Turner stagger to his feet, and climb up the rock, rope in hand.

By this time the *Drake* was so swept by the waves that the men were all crowded together on the poop, clinging to anything that would allow them to keep their footing. She swayed to and fro in the cleft where she had been wedged, and every second seemed likely to bring the end, when suddenly a tremendous sea lifted her in its grasp and carried her close to the rock on which the boatswain was already standing. Captain Baker was quick to seize his opportunity, and ordered his men instantly to take to the water. But one and all refused to leave him.

'We will follow you,' they said, and it was long before they could be induced to obey him. At length he prevailed on them one by one to swim to the rock, though a few, by this time half frozen, were too weak to reach it.

Last of all came the captain.

While they were on the ship the rock had appeared a harbour of refuge; if they could only get there their sufferings would be over and they would be perfectly safe. But now they saw to their horror that when the tide was high the rock would be completely covered, and their only chance was to struggle to reach the mainland by help of the boatswain's rope. The tide was coming in fast, and there was not a moment to lose.

'You go, Turner,' said the captain, and the boatswain tied another knot in the rope that was already round his waist and leaped into the sea. By the faint rays of the dawn the watchers could trace his fight with the waves, and their hearts seemed to beat almost to bursting and to stand still by turns. But inch by inch he gained something, and at length, bruised and exhausted, he stepped on to the beach.

He was safe, but the rope had only been just long enough to stretch across.

By order of the captain, who called them by name, man after man crossed the surf successfully, till forty-four of the crew stood on the other side, and only six were left—six, and one of them a woman. In vain they had again and again implored their captain to take his turn with the rest; his answer was always the same, 'When everyone is safe on the other side I will go over.' Now the goal was almost reached, and it was time, for the water had nearly touched the topmost point of the rock they were on.

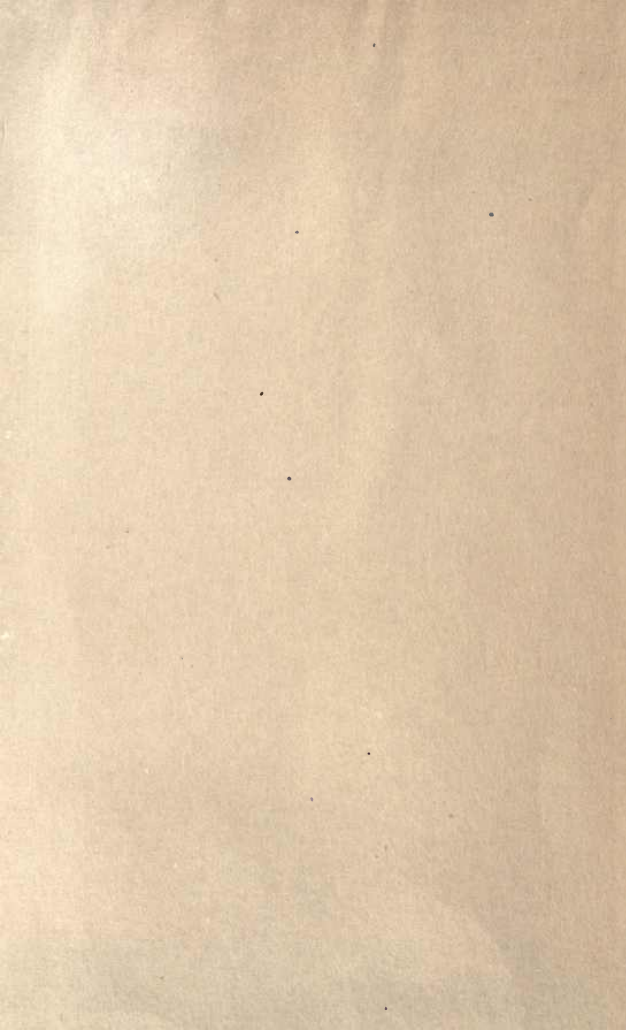
With one accord the eyes of the five men who remained behind rested upon the woman, who lay there half dead, as it seemed, already. Without the presence of the captain who can tell if the desire of life might not have thrust all else aside, and she might have been abandoned to her fate? But with the captain looking on and sharing their danger not a creature would have dared even to think such a thought, and a tall sailor stepped forward and silently lifting her in his arms, fastened the rope round him. But the continued fretting against the jagged rocks had done its work. Many of the strands were cut through, and though the rope might have carried them all across, one by one, it was not strong enough to bear two at once; it broke, and both the man and the woman disappeared in the surf.

Then Captain Baker and the three who were with him knew that this was the end. Before another rope could be got the tide would be over the rock.

The men on the land understood the desperate need, and while some ran as fast as they could to borrow a new rope from the nearest farmhouse, the others tied their handkerchiefs and trousers together, in the hope that the old rope might yet be made long enough to stretch across the chasm. But when everything had been used it was still too short, and there was nothing left for them to do but to wait and watch and to long for

the return of their companions. For a while hope rose high, for each wave receded and left them clinging tightly to the little projections. Surely the tide must be on the turn now, and if they could only hold on for a few moments the danger was past. Then a sob broke from one of the men. A gigantic wave was seen gathering itself up ; it broke with a loud roar and blinding spray, and when they looked again the rock was bare.

'Shipwrecks of the Royal Navy.'



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